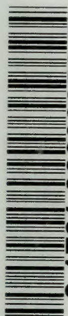

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THE CHILD AND THE PARENT

THE CARE COMMITTEE

THE CHILD AND THE PARENT

A SMALL VOLUME CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE PROVISION OF MEALS TO THE CHILDREN OF POOR PARENTS; AND AN ACCOUNT OF CHILDREN'S CARE COMMITTEES, THEIR WORK AND ORGANISATION, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE PLACE OF THE VOLUNTARY WORKER AND THE DUTIES OF AN OFFICIAL

BY

DOUGLAS PEPLER

FIRST ORGANISER OF CARE COMMITTEES, L.C.C.

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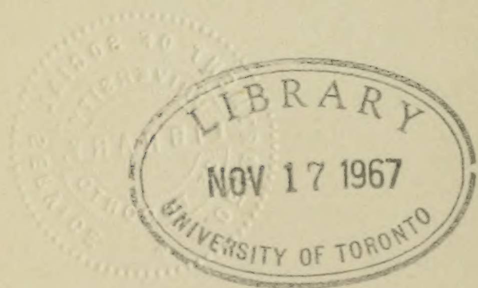
IN PREPARATION

Uniform with this, a companion volume, entitled "THE MUNICIPAL MOTHER," *by the same Author.*



PREFACE

CARE Committees have to grapple with a problem in which they are at present hampered by certain "facilities." These are the provision of meals, of medical treatment for children at school, and of labour exchanges for them as they leave. If men are to be free and able to control their own lives, it is difficult to see how material municipal aid for their children will help them. It must follow that men will be content more easily to have their lives regulated by Insurance Commissioners, factory inspectors, and other officials. If Care Committees are to live they must be invited to resist the use of these "facilities" except as rare necessities: then they will bring a new spirit of freedom into the school through a normal relationship with the children's parents. At present the Committees are given the power to be "charitable," not at their own expense, with little, if any, inducement to restrain that power.

The "after care" of children as they leave school is the most hopeful side of Care Committee work. It is no small service to parents and children to be compelled to consider the significance of early employment and to approach such non-compulsory organisations as evening institutes, boys' clubs, and the Scouts, as opportunities for self-development and continued education which it is a privilege to secure. A present harmful proceeding, that by which a school-leaving form containing information which the parent may not see is filled up for every child and passed on to the labour exchange, might easily be dropped.

The most dangerous public official is the municipal

doctor when he ceases to be content with inspection and attempts to force children to be treated at centres under his control. This difficulty is nominally avoided in London, where the treatment centres are paid for but not staffed by the Council. These centres are not, however, co-operative clinics which might well have grown up independently to meet the demands made by parents as a result of the school medical inspection of their children; they are artificially created clinics for children between five and fourteen years of age, which deal with a limited class of ailment. A uniform charge of 1s. is made, even for ringworm treatment which costs a guinea; but in order that there may be no pretence at parental independence this sum is not paid by the parent to the doctor for treatment, but to the Council for providing it.

The outstanding difficulty in Care Committee work is the official one. The official is permanent; the power over the official, the "popularly" elected body, is constantly changing, and the voluntary workers have no organic unity among themselves. The passing authority of the Council depends upon the advice of officials which it has inherited from a previous Council; in order that the Council may have some glimmering of what work is being done the official is forced to make a virtue of conformity to the written rule. Except, alas, in rare moments of vision, when some conception of the child's personality and of the voluntary worker's sacrifice and need breaks through the mists of controversy, the Council forgets that every single child and family is different from every other child and family, and that no two Care Committees are alike.

In this little book I have made some attempt to indicate the way out of these difficulties.

DOUGLAS PEPLER.

January 15th, 1914.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Too easily having agreed to write an article on school feeding for the *Teachers' Encyclopedia*, and to read a paper on Children's Care Committees before the *National Conference on the Prevention of Destitution* (1911), I found myself possessed of sufficient material for a small book on care committee matters. I have to thank Miss Medley and Miss Elspeth Carr for valuable help in discovering authorities and copying many more pages of deeds and books than appear in this volume. To Miss Margaret Frere, to Miss T. M. Morton, and to all who have given their best to the Care Committee experiment, more than thanks are due, because but for them there would have been little to write about.

DOUGLAS PEPLER.

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A PREFACE ABOUT THE CHILD

"Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right."—PROV. xx. 11.

WHEN we have read all the reports of this Government department and that, when all the figures have been codified and explained, and we have put down the latest Blue-book from the Board of Education, it is well to stand for a moment in the street to watch the first child that passes. He is one of the ciphers about which we have been reading. As he goes by, do we wonder how many other children he has to sit with in his class, how he appreciates the new syllabus which we have been at such pains to master, whether he could be persuaded to attend an evening class when he leaves, and why he does not weep to be allowed to remain at school after he is fourteen? Or do we look into his eyes to guess of what he is thinking, do we feel an inclination to walk beside him and whistle the same shrill tune as he, or shout without ceremony to his friend across the road?

I, alas! am one of those who have helped to compile statistics about the child, the wages of his parents, the rooms of his home and the number of his

brethren. But at the end, as at the beginning, the child is greater than all statistics, still wild and free, notwithstanding the harness of the school, the conformity of repetition and the confinement of the class. The confraternity of the child is world-wide and ageless. Aristotle, Hannibal, Dante and Mr. Smith-Jones of "The Gables," Upper Tooting, may have been such as these who pass us in Lambeth Walk or the Mile End Road.

It is not, however, the child of school age which will tell us most of the child at school, but the one having left, yesterday or the day before, who must explain how it happens that he has so little of his schooling to carry with him into manhood.[1] Therefore in writing of the child it is of the one who has left school that I speak; it is by the splendour or poverty of the bloom that we judge the strength of the plant.

When the nine years of schooling are over—the daily class, the loud voice of teacher, the scramble in the playground, the orderly march up stone stairs to the schoolroom, the lessons and drill, the obedience and disobedience, the morning and afternoon assembly for prayers—when these things on a given day have suddenly and absolutely to cease, what does the boy think is to happen to him? Does he drift into the job his parent or teacher has found

[1] *Cf.* "Across the Bridges" (Alexander Paterson), Chapters viii. and ix.

for him, or for which he has himself been in negotiation already? Does he aimlessly take up his basket, or don his uniform, or climb up behind the van, or spend the whole day an independent purveyor of the sporting news? Does he begin his new life without looking back, without taking stock of himself, to see what good talent needs development, what bad one requires to be discarded, what the State has given him during that nine years, and how much or how little he owes his parents? Is the boy's mind fixed only upon some future goal of monetary independence, when he shall be able to say "do this" to his servants and it shall be done? Does he look forward to good weeks of betting, after which he shall be able to hire a trap to go to Epsom with the prospect of a happy and uproarious return? Does he figure up the runs he will make at cricket and the medals he will win in the swimming baths? Does he count the hours of his employment on one hand and the hours of his leisure on both? Will the boy add Sunday school and all other forms of instruction, or class, or religious observance, to the years that are behind, and forget to include them in those which are to come?

Can any of us give the boy's answer or the girl's? Do we know so much about the children for whom we care that we can say this boy is building a fine city of his thoughts—a city fit for the Kingdom of God, but that boy sees not beyond the smoke

of the city of destruction; this girl has dreams of splendid service, that girl has no vision beyond her mirror? If we are frank with ourselves we shall realise that few of the children are thus known to us, that we have become so used to the many children leaving school and passing out into the big world that we have forgotten the *one* child who is leaving; he has become an event of daily *un*-importance.

And yet the day a child leaves school and the meaning which it has for him is of tremendous importance. On that day he can, and, alas! he often does, throw over the past deliberately; he can scrap his education as a Government scraps an obsolete ironclad; while, of course, on the other hand, he can turn toward the future as a priest turns to the east. He may see in the rising sun of a new day the promise of light, because from the east has been seen the growing splendour of the day before; he may be glad for the coming of the Christ that is to be because of his knowledge of the Christ that is and was.

All of us want that the child who has passed through the school shall look back upon his time there not as a memory merely, but as an abiding possession, as that beginning of the structure of himself which may serve as the foundation for a holy temple.

I do not, of course, suppose "that the present

education given in the schools is all that can be desired." We allow the child to enter his industrial life too early, still ill-equipped for the struggle which all life should mean.[1] But there is, therefore, no no less responsibility for us who have the care of children laid upon us to face the problems which now exist, and especially this one that is created by the sudden transition of the child from educational to industrial surroundings. It is a vital and personal problem, and would be precisely as interesting and as important as it is now, were the leaving age sixteen instead of fourteen, and no young person were allowed to work for profit in the street or anywhere else.

Let us take a few children into our confidence to see what it is they are asking us to do for them. Here is a boy whose father is on the railway, an engine-driver, and the son means to follow the same path. It is an easy example; the boy has had this idea in his mind for some time, he has been to the engine-shed on a Saturday, his father has shown him how this lever starts the engine, how that stops it, and how that glorious cord may be pulled to set the whistle shrieking. He knows just exactly what he wants, and his father knows how he can attain to it. But the next few boys come from homes where the father is a labourer with neither fixed employer nor

[1] See conclusions of Cyril Jackson, "Report on Boy Labour," Poor Law Commission.

employment, where the mother goes out daily charing or fur pulling, or where there is work brought into the home—brushes or boxes or shirts to make. In this class boys and girls have already taken their share in the family toil, and have not perhaps thought of any wide liberty of choice; their parents tell them to get into Pickford's if they can; if not there are papers to be sold or a tradesman's goods to be delivered. What are we to do for these? Some have helped father and mother at the stall on Saturday night, skinning rabbits or merely minding the barrow while the parents refresh themselves at the "Spotted Dog"; these children see no future beyond the barrow and the public-house. What are we to do for them?

So we make one or two experiments. We find rough boys decent jobs without causing one vacancy in the rough jobs, until we learn that we cannot stop these boys either from the blind alley or the barrow—the great industrial machine is far too powerful for us. It is when this is revealed to us for the first time that we are apt to despair. There is nevertheless something to be done, and the first thing which I believe one has to learn is that though he should bother and fuss over the immediate occupation of a child leaving school, that is only a matter of secondary importance. The matter of prime importance is to see that the boy and his parents know exactly what is the probable future of the type of job chosen, and

how much depends upon careful supervision of the lad during his first years of industry. For a boy in the blind alley there is the evening school, where he can qualify himself to undertake work which would otherwise be difficult to obtain. There is the boys' club or scout corps, which should supplement and co-operate with the evening school in order to keep the boy still under the influence which began at the elementary school, the influence of training and discipline. For, with all our teachers and the huge staff of officials engaged in educational work, there may be less real education given in school than there is in a corps of scouts officered by a young man at the end of his day's work, or in a club for girls run by a woman whom no municipality pays, and for whom the State provides no salary.

Clubs and scout corps naturally remind us of another method by which we can learn about the child—the recreation of which he stands in need and which we may be able to supply. We now realise that there is more to be learnt in a country ramble than in the nature class held in a crowded schoolroom. Ruskin said many years ago that the object of true education was to make a child *like the right things*; but though this is tremendously true we have, so far, assumed that a child must like a thing if it is told to: and we have failed in our teaching. No one can like the country if he has only read about it in a book and been told about it by his teacher. He

must be taken into the country, the mystery of its sights, sounds and smells must be explained to him; he must learn to know the message of the wayside stream and flower, learn the differing notes of birds, observe the ways of the squirrel through the trees. I wonder how many there are of us who have noticed the highways along the branches which the squirrels use with the same devotion to established procedure as we use our roads and footways; rabbits also have their paths among the grasses and underbush, from which even sudden fright will often not wean them; and great shall be the delight of the child in learning these things. In London we are cut off from many of these mysteries, but our parks are not devoid of them altogether. It is easy to take a walk with a few boys or girls on a Saturday or Sunday. If the excursion means train fares, let the children know in advance; there are usually pennies to spare on these days. There are also many interesting things within walking distance—parks, old churches, museums, art galleries, the Tower and the river, and none of these things is dull. When we have learnt the wonder of the grass of the field which to-day is and to-morrow is not now perhaps cast in the oven, but mown for hay, we are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven.

I have sat for half an hour in front of the Elgin marbles with six dirty little schoolboys, when we have lived through their day—the sweeping tumultuous

rise of Helios, though but suggested by a few pieces of stone, can lead one far back into the wonder of Athenian history, and far forward into the unknown future which may be brighter for the splendour of a slum child's reverence. How much also may we enjoy together the little engravings on coins and gems—they may give one a better history of Christianity than any book contains; we may watch the ship, the symbol of the Church, sail the waters of life through many early century storms: there may be even a danger of our becoming too learned in the faith of the Gnostics or confused between Coptic and Abyssinian vestments!

I touch upon these treasures in our museums because we seldom think of them in association with the boy; they are hidden, we believe, behind glass cases, guarded by fierce policemen, whose duty it is to keep them from everyone save the most erudite professor. But as we realise that these cases are crammed full of romance, it may dawn upon us that the boy has a very pressing need to be introduced to them. In the same way, it seems to me, have the Saints and Fathers of the Church been shut up in stale, dusty books, until any semblance of life is lost to them. I am amazed at the way religion is taught either in school or church; our Lord Himself is clothed in unnatural garments and placed far, oh! so far, out of reach, when, if ever there was a hero who could clutch the heart of a boy, he was Jesus

the Carpenter of Nazareth, who smashed through the worn-out, cumbersome conventionalities to bring men and boys to the proper understanding of God, fatherhood and religion. It is when we begin to see a child has within him the power of imagination[1] that we begin to understand what recreation he stands in need of. Unless that power is developed we can hardly hope that he will fathom S. Paul's saying that it is the things which are unseen that are eternal, nor that he will become aware that he possesses "the power of an imperishable life." Surely we are agreed that it is the boy or man who sees beyond the temporal, material things about him who will attain to the humanity, if not the divinity, of life. The drudgery of his work even may, and in the end must, be lost in the glow of his own personality with which he will clothe the most trivial task.

[1] "Finally, we want imagination, because without it the world remains a dead and inert mass, while with it the world has become a place of living wonder, and because also imagination is the sole guide who can lead us towards a saner and a richer civilisation."—R. A. Bray, "The Town Child."

THE CARE COMMITTEE, THE CHILD AND THE PARENT

PART I

THE PROVISION OF FREE MEALS TO CHILDREN OF POOR PARENTS

"Old persons endure fasting most easily; next adults; young persons not nearly so well; and most especially infants, and of them such as are of a particularly lively spirit."

"When in a state of hunger, one ought not to undertake labour."

APHORISMS—HIPPOCRATES (born 460 B.C.).

IT was, I think, in the second century before our era that the State of Rome found it necessary to make public provision of food for its poorer citizens. The system had later (A.D. 98)[1] to be extended to the children of these citizens in order to arrest the decrease in the birth rate! Illegitimate children received a

[1] If the largesse of Augustus Cæsar be omitted, since Mr. J. B. Frith ("Augustus Cæsar," J. B. Frith, p. 201; see also Merivale, "History of the Romans under the Empire," Vol. vii., p. 256) states that he gave "even boys under eleven the right to participate therein," then we may say that the special provision of food for children began with Emperor Nerva (A.D. 96–98), and was continued by succeeding Emperors (Pertinax excepted) until the death of Alexander Severus. Maximin succeeded him, when "Every city of the Empire was possessed of an

smaller allowance. The younger Pliny[1] tells us the children are fed at the public expense in order to be "a bulwark in time of war and an ornament in time of peace, and thus they thoroughly learn to love their country not so much as being their native land, but as being their nourisher." It was anticipated that the children of these children would not need public maintenance.[2]

The Roman experiment does not appear to have found its way into this country. The community's interest in the nourishment of children was through the family or an approved guardian. Orphans and foundlings had to be cared for as now. There are two Dooms of Ine which remind us how early in the laws of England this care is recognised.

> 688—725. "Let VI. shillings be paid for the fostering of a foundling for the first year; XII. shillings the second; XXX. shillings the third; afterwards, according to its appearance." (No. 26.)
>
> "If a Ceorl and his wife have a child between them, and the ceorl die, let the mother have her child

independent revenue, destined to purchase corn for the multitude, and to supply the expenses of the games and entertainments. By a simple act of authority, the whole mass of wealth was at once confiscated for the use of the Imperial Treasury."—Gibbon, "Decline and Fall," Vol. i., p. 173.

[1] An inscription to Pliny's memory states that he "likewise in his lifetime gave for Sustenance of Sons and Daughters of the Townsfolk Five Hundred Thousand Sesterces."

[2] For evidence from inscriptions see "Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum," Vol. vi., 31,298; ix., 5,700; xi., 5,957, 6,002; xiv., 4,003.

> and feed it; let VI. shillings be given her for its fostering; a cow in summer, an ox in winter. Let the kindred take care of the frumstol[1] until it be of age." (No. 38.)

The Children Act, 1908, Section I. (5) and VI. (1 and 2) is the direct descendant of one of Alfred's laws. "If anyone commit his infant to another's keeping, and he dies during such keeping, let him who feeds him prove himself innocent of treachery if anyone accuse him of aught." (Doom 17.)

To Ethelred, Alfred's older brother, may be said to belong the first suggestion of the "Care Committee" idea. In law 47: "And that they do not too often oppress widows and stepchildren, but willingly gladden them."[2]

In reference to schools founded during the early period of the Middle Ages, it is unusual to find much said as to the food to be provided for the scholars; there is a happy mention in the Durham Cathedral Muniments of the care to be taken "for the maintenance of three scholars of Durham School, whom the master shall charitably choose and send daily with a tablet made in honour of the Blessed Virgin and St. Cuthbert to the Almoner of Durham, who shall charitably provide for them food and drink,"[3] which

[1] Principal house.

[2] See "Ancient Laws and Institutes of England," Ed. by B. Thorpe, 1840, p. 139.

[3] "Educational Charters and Documents."—A. F. Leach, Cambridge University Press, 1911.

shows that free meals went at times with free education at the end of the twelfth century.

Among the "poor clerks" at the *House of Sorbonne* in Paris,[1] besides the free Bursars, a certain number of Beneficiarii were supported by the broken meats of the Hall dinner and supper, in return for which they performed some menial service to the Fellows. But there was otherwise no difference in the quality of the education they received.

There is an English parallel to this in the provision for the *Choristers at Winchester* in the fourteenth century; they might be taught with the scholars, but were to be fed with their broken victuals and to act as their servants.[2] At the same time it must be noted that all the scholars were not in this superior position. For Mr. Leach[3] writes that "in Edward III.'s time it was given in evidence, before the foundation of Winchester College, that thirteen poor scholars, named by the Master of the *High School at Winchester*, were reckoned among the 100 poor who were daily fed at *St. Cross Hospital*."

In the *Foundation of Manchester School* (April, 1524) there is a clause: "That no scholar shall bring meat or drink into the school, neither there to use their meat or drink, but always if any such poor scholar be there, that for their poverty do bring their meat and

[1] Founded 1258–70 for sixteen students of Theology, four from each nation.—"History of Universities," Rashdall.

[2] A. F. Leach, *Contemporary Review*, July, 1893.

[3] "English Schools at the Reformation," p. 25.

drink with them, they are to go to some house in the town, there to eat and drink, and resort again to school." As this free school was founded because of "the great poverty of the common people" (perhaps also because "the children of the said country have pregnant wits"), it may be that the worthy founder believed in that "parental responsibility" which not a few in these present days consider to be in danger if free school meals are provided.

Dietry.

> "Of his diete mesurable was he,
> For it was of no superfluitee,
> But of greet norissing and digestible."
>
> —CHAUCER.

Though it has been left to the twentieth century to revive the public provision of meals to school children, food for children has, curiously, been a matter of private concern in other ages. Hippocrates (460 B.C.) was concerned with the relation between diet and health; but I suppose if the nutritive values of food had always been the subject of scientific experiment, the choice of food has usually been allowed to be a question of natural appetite. Fortunately, there is not lacking evidence of the kind of foods given to children before the advent of the public analyst.

From Ælfric the Grammarian (995—1020—5), in the time of King Edgar, we have the first glimpse of the dietry of a school child, if we may use his

"Colloquium," for teaching schoolboys Latin, as an authority.

> "What do you eat?"
>
> "I do not eat meat yet, because I am a boy at school."
>
> "What do you eat then?"
>
> "Barley and eggs, fish and cheese, butter and beans and all clean things, after saying grace for them."
>
> "You have a very large appetite if you eat all that is put before you."
>
> "I am not so ravenous that I can eat all kinds of food at one meal."
>
> "And what do you drink?"
>
> "Beer[1] (Censam), if there is any, if not water."
>
> "Don't you drink wine?"
>
> "I am not rich enough to be able to buy wine for myself: beside wine is not a drink for boys and stupid people, but old men and wise people."

The fare of a *Tudor schoolboy* may be gathered from the dialogue written by Vives (1491—1540) for the teaching of Latin. The menu would almost certainly be over-comprehensive, and as Vives taught Princess (afterwards Queen) Mary, the children of and for whom he writes would hardly have been of the poorer class.

> Piso. Our early breakfast is a piece of coarse

[1] Beer seems early to have been the national drink. The first schoolmaster to protest against its use appears to be one William Smith, "so called from his craft . . . who . . . refused wine and beer as poison, and going barefoot for some years, meanwhile learnt the alphabet and wrote it with his own hand." He assisted at a Lollard School (?) outside Leicester, 1382.—"Educational Charters and Documents," A. F. Leach, p. 329.

bread and some butter or some fruit as the time of the year supplies. For lunch, there are cooked vegetables or pottage in pottage-vessels, and meat with relishes. Sometimes turnips, sometimes cabbages, starch food, wheat-meal, or rice. Then on fish-days, buttermilk from butter which has been turned out in deep dishes, with some cakes of bread, and a fresh fish, if it can be bought fairly cheap in the fish-market, or if not, a salt-fish, well soaked. Then pease, or pulse, or lentils, or beans, or lupines.

NEPOTULUS. How much of these does each get?

PISO. Bread as much as he wishes: of viands as much as is necessary not for satiety, but for nourishment. For elaborate feasts, you must seek elsewhere, not in the school, where the aim is to form minds to the way of virtue.

NEP. What, then, do you drink?

PISO. Some drink fresh, clear water; others light beer; some few, but only seldom, wine, well diluted. The *afternoon meal*, or before-meal, consists of some bread and almonds or nuts, dried figs and raisins; in summer, of pears, apples, cherries or plums. But when we go into the country for the sake of our minds (recreation), then we have milk, either fresh or congealed, fresh cheese, cream. Horse-beans soaked in lye, vine-leaves, and anything else which the country house affords. The *chief meal* begins with a salad with closely-cut bits, sprinkled with salt, moistened with drops of olive-oil, and with vinegar poured on it.

NEP. Can you have nut or turnip oil?

PISO. Ugh! the unsavoury and unhealthy stuff! Then there is in a great vessel a concoction of mutton broth with sauce, and to it, dried plums,

roots, or herbs as supplements, and at times a most savoury pie.

NEP. What sort of sauces do you have?

PISO. The best and wisest of sauces, hunger. Besides, on appointed week-days we get roasted meat—as a rule, veal; in spring, sometimes, some young kid. As an after-dish a little bit of radish and cheese, not old and decayed, but fresh cheese, which is more nourishing than the old, pears, peaches, and quinces. On the days on which no meat may be eaten, we have eggs instead of meat, either broiled, fried, or boiled, either singly by themselves or mingled in one pan with vinegar or oil, not so much poured on as dropped in; sometimes a little fish, and nuts follow on cheese.

NEP. How much does every one get?

PISO. Two eggs and two nuts.

A refreshing thought for the feeding of children during the stress of examination is to be found in the Minutes of a City Company. In 1608 the Court of the *Merchant Taylors Company* (administering Robert Dowe's charity for the Company's school) ordered:—

> "There shall bee payd unto the maister of the schoole for beere, ale, and new manchet bread with a dish of sweete butter, which hee shall have ready in the morning, with two fine glasses set upon the table, and covered with two faire napkins, and two faire trenchers, with a knife laid upon each trencher, to th' end that such as please may take part to stay their stomachs untill the end of the examination, ijs."

Extracts from the foundation statutes of two well-

known colleges give us a glimpse into matters of the seventeenth century which is not uninstructive.

In the statutes (1619) drawn up by *Edward Alleyne*, the founder, for the *College of God's Gift* (*Dulwich College*) there is a curious system of ballot for entrance thereto. Statute 7 provides:

> "That every one of the poore schollers shalbe, at the time . . . of admission, between the age of 6 or 8 yeares or thereaboute, and to remain as Schollers . . . noe longer but untill they bee eighteene yeares of age . . . at the time of admission to be orphants, without father and mother or at least such as their parents receive the weeklye Almes of the parish."

As a vacancy occurred boys were to be drawn to fill it.

> "Twoe equall small rowleses of paper to be indifferently made and rolled up in one of which rolls the wordes "Godd's Guift," are to be written, and the other wrole is to be left blank."
>
> "that poore childe that draweth the blanck lott to have iiij pence a day paid him for everye day after the death or depture of yt poore scholler for whose place the lotts were drawne, to the tyme of the drawing thereof."

The statutes as to diet I give with little curtailment.

> 84. . . . The diett of the college shalbe kepte ordinarily for the master, warden, senior and junior ffellowes, and poore schollers . . . at two tables in the hall of the said college, at the one whereof the master and warden, senior and junior ffellowes

shall sitt togither at the upper end of the saide hall, and the twelve poore schollers shall sitt at the side table, in the said hall.

86. That one of the chaunters, alias junior ffellowes of the said college, shall weekely, by turnes be steward of the diett and provision of the said college to see the same be sweete and wholesome, and daily to survey yt and deliver yt out of the wett larder to the cooke, and being drest, shall see yt be delivered into the master's, warden's, ffellowes', and poore schollers' table, and see that the poore schollers be not defrauded of the proporcon of their diett, as well of bread and beere as of other victuals; and hee shall every Friday, at the conclusion of his weeke, give a just accompt of the quantity of victualls that hath bene spent in the said college during that weeke.

87. That after grace is said at the master's table, both for dynner and supper, one of the poore schollers by turnes shall reade a chapter in the Bible in the hall, and all the rest of the poore schollers shall give eare thereunto, except those three of them who by turnes are to fetch in the diett.

88. That noe one particular person shall have any particular allowance of diett by himself, and that there shalbee no divident or dividing of diett into shares or proporcons, at the master's table, and that none of the said college shall assigne over his said diett to any other person in his absence; and that the master, warden, senior and junior ffellowes, and poore schollers shall take their diett in noe other place than in the place aforesaid. . . .

89. That the said twelve poore schollers shall have their diett proportioned and ordered for them

in manner following (that is to saie): every morning in the weeke, about eight of the clock, except Sundaies and holydaies, to have a loafe of bread waighing twelve ounces troy weight, to be divided amongst fower of them, and each of them a cup of beere; and on Mondayes, Tuesdaies, and Thursdaies, at dynner and supper, each of they to have a good messe of pottage, and at each time two poundes of good beefe boyled, and two of the said loaves between fower of them, and beere without stint: and on Wednesdaies, Ffrydaies and Sattordaies to have the said proporcon of bread and beere as in other daies, and at dynner to have milke or other pottage befitting the season, and amongst them all twelve, to have half a pound of butter and two pounds of cheese; and instead of either butter or cheese to have a proportion of fish, or peare, or apple pyes, according as the seasons are, and the like at supper, except Fridaies and fasting dayes, and then every of them to have the said proporcon of bread and beere at night as they have allowed them for their dynners at noones; and on Sundayes and holydaies, in open times they shall have two poundes of roasted beefe between every fower of them, with the like proporcon of bread and beere as on other daies for their dynner; and at supper a competent allowance of roasted mutton between every fower of them, as neare as may be, according to the proporcon of beef allowed them for dynner, with such increase of diett in Lent and on gawdy daies as the discretion of the surveyor of the diett for the time being shall thinck fitt.

90. I ordaine, and doe especially charge and require the master and warden of the said college,

> for the time being, to have a speciale regard that the beef and mutton assigned for the poor schollers be sweet and good, their beere well brewed, and their bread well baked, and made of cleane and sweet wheatten meale, the bran taken out, and every loafe after it is baked to weigh twelve ounces of troy weight; and when any augmentacon of diett shall be made in the said college, either by divident or other wise, that then the diett of the said twelve poore schollers to be augmented also according to the rate and proporcon of increase of the other dietts in the said college.

"The Hospital of King James founded 1626 in *Charterhouse* in the County of Middlesex at the humble petition and only costs and charges of Thomas Sutton, Esq.," was for pensioners as well as scholars "none under the age of Ten or above the age of Fifteen" and "children of such poor men as want means to bring them up." The provision for their food was not without freedom. "Two of the Pensioners of the Hospital in their several turns shall go daily to market with the manciple and Chief Cook to buy the provisions for the Diet of the Hospital that choice may be made by them of that which shall be good and sweet and to see ready money paid for the same." No member of the Hospital "shall send or carry away Bread, Beer or Meat from their Tables."

"The Cooks and other servants in the Kitchen shall diligently perform their duties and dress the victuals and send them up to the Tables in a clean and decent manner and they shall not cut off any

pieces, or pieces of joints of meat under pretence of Kitchen Fees." The Baker had to supply "Bread of the finest Wheat Flower, and that each loaf weighs six ounces Troy weight." The Bread allowance was "two loaves a day for each Person in Commons." The Brewer had to "deliver wholesome and good Beer according to the Price stated (*8s. 6d.* per Barrel) . . . two quarts a day for each person in Commons." The Gardener had to furnish the scholars' tables "with such salleting as the Gardens shall produce or he shall be directed by the Master to purchase for them."

Workhouse schools were established in various parts of the country by the end of the seventeenth century; by the middle of the eighteenth the workhouse had become an institution. An account of the one in Bishopsgate Street informs us that on the Stewards' side poor children were taken in from Benefactors giving a substantial sum of money and "these children are by that means with their labour rather a profit than charge to the House."

The following is a Bill of Fare for every week:

	Breakfast.	Dinner.	Supper.
Sunday ...	Bread and Beer	Beef and Broth	Bread and Butter or Cheese
Monday ...	Beef Broth	Pease Porridge	Ditto
Tuesday ...	Bread and Butter or Cheese	Rice Milk	Ditto
Wednesday...	Ditto	Plum-Dumplings	Ditto
Thursday ...	Ditto	Beef and Broth	Ditto
Friday ...	Beef Broth	Barley Broth	Ditto
Saturday ...	Bread and Butter or Cheese	Milk Porridge	Ditto

In summer time, Pease, Beans, Greens and Roots are allowed, as the Season affords them.

But some charity schools at least fared better. In the revised (date about 1700) statutes of *Emanuel Hospital*, which was founded in 1594 for twenty poor people and twenty poor children, there is the following provision:

> *Dyet for the Children.*—Each Child to be allowed for Breakfast every Morning, One Loaf made of the Best wheaten Bread, weighing three Ounces after it is well baked, and Small Beer.
>
> For Dinner on *Sundays*, boiled Beef with Greens or Turnips and Broth, a Loaf of the same Bread, weighing six Ounces, and that they have the same Quantity of Bread every Day for Dinner.
>
> For Dinner on *Mondays*, roasted Legs of Mutton.
>
> For Dinner on *Tuesdays*, boiled Beef with Greens or Turnips, and Broth.
>
> For Dinner on *Wednesdays*, roasted Legs of Mutton, and sometimes roast Beef.
>
> For Dinner on *Thursdays*, boiled Beef with Greens, Turnips and Broth.
>
> For Dinner on *Fridays*, boiled Legs and Loins of Mutton.
>
> For Dinner on *Saturdays*, each Child to have a Mess containing a Pint of Peas Pottage, with two Ounces of Bacon or Pork.
>
> For Supper every Night one Loaf of the same Bread, weighing six Ounces, and two Ounces of Cheese each; and those Children that cannot eat Cheese to have one Ounce of Butter in lieu thereof.

> In the Summer the Children to have once for Dinner Green Peas, once Green Peas Pottage, once Beans, and once Beans and four Ounces of Bacon each, and one Ounce of Butter each with the Peas, Peas Pottage and Beans, but not with the Beans and Bacon.
>
> That each Child shall have six Ounces of Beef or Mutton, exclusive of Bone, after it is well-boiled or roasted, every Day for Dinner.
>
> That the Small Beer shall be of equal Goodness with that usually sold for eight Shillings *per* Barrel, and that each Child shall drink as much as they desire at each Meal.

These meals were given with little variation for over 150 years. The diet was included in the revision of the statutes in 1784, when Tuesday ceased to be a meat day—"for dinner on Tuesdays, rice milk." In 1795 the "rice milk" took the place of mutton on Mondays, and "on Tuesdays four ounces of boiled mutton with vegetables." It was ordered "the respective allowance of meat to be clear of bone, and after dressing." In 1844 Tuesday again became a meatless day; instead "3 ozs. plum pudding"; while the vegetarian influence spread to Saturday as well "5¾ ozs. bread, ¾ oz. butter and peas soup with vegetables." Perhaps the supply of small beer at dinner and supper, "as much as requisite," was increased on these days.

This menu compares not unfavourably with the school meals of the present time. The following are

among 14 menus approved by the London County Council.[1]

1. Haricot Bean Soup.
Bread.
Treacle Pudding.
3. Cheese and Potato Pie.
Bread.
Apple Roll.
6. Fish and Potato Pie.
Bread.
Baked Raisin Pudding.
9. Oxcheek stewed with Peas.
Dumplings.
Potatoes.
Bread.

It must be remembered that between 1870 and 1908 the usual school meal provided by charity for London children consisted of soup and bread.

Manners at Table.

There is also not a little information as to the way in which the food should be served to children and the manner in which it should be received by them. How far the rules were adhered to is not for me to say.

Among the Almoner's duties at the *St. Alban's Almonry* at the end of the twelfth century, where "one or two boys" were kept by charity, it was enjoined that he "for the sake of good manners, not because he is obliged to do so, maintains table-

[1] See "Handbook to Care Committees," 1910 (No. 1332).

cloths and napkins for the boys' and servants' table there."[1]

Chaucer gives us a picture of the perfect manners at table which, though those of a Prioresse, may show what would be expected from the young:

> "At mete wel y-taught was she with-alle;
> She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
> Ne wette hir fingres in hir sauce depe,
> Wel coudd she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
> That no drope ne fille up-on hir brest,
> In curteisye was set ful muche hir lest,
> Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
> That in hir coppe was no ferthing sene
> Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte."[2]

It is provided in the fifteenth century statutes of the *College of Stoke by Clare* in Suffolk (founded 1124, refounded 1415 by Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March) that the five choristers should have "five marks in the year or the usual terms in college, or at least sufficient for clothing and food with other necessaries." And that "the choristers will have their meals in common with the vicars and for each of them let the General receiver or head of the College pay 8*d*. a week.[3] But if the vicars do not like having them to meals for 8*d*. a week, let the dean

[1] "Educational Charters and Documents."—A. F. Leach, Cambridge University Press, 1911.

[2] "The Canterbury Tales"—The Prologue.

[3] *Cf.* Eton foundation, where Scholars and Choristers were to receive commons to the value of 10*d*. a week.

receive them." Clerics were reckoned at 10*d.* per week.[1]

Fifteenth-century manners may not always have achieved the perfection which Bishop Bekynton approved in 1460.[2]

The Choristers at Wells Cathedral had carefully planned days:

> "At meal times, whether it be dinner or supper the Chorister Boys should come to their Common Hall quietly without noise and tumult and since above all things praise to the God of heaven is rightly given who giveth food to all flesh, the boys should come in their proper order as follows: first the smaller boys before the elder, and distinctly and audibly say Grace and then go to the table, and sit down quietly; when they are duly seated they should behave properly like gentlemen (*honeste*), not leaning over the table or dirtying their napkins or other things on the table: they should take up their meat *curialiter et honeste* (? carefully and nicely), cut or nicely break their bread, not gnaw it with their teeth, or tear it with their nails, drink when their mouths are empty and eat their food *honeste moderate non ravide.* They should not clean their teeth with their knives." They were to ask for things in Latin in a low voice and should think themselves content.

The Carlisle Cathedral School was among the Cathedral schools reconstituted after the suppression

[1] Dugdale, "Monasticon Anglicanum," Book vi., Vol. viii. [ed. 1846, pp. 1415—22].

[2] Bishop Bekynton, as Secretary to Henry VI., was closely associated with the foundation of Eton, and celebrated his first mass,

of the Monasteries, and the statute (June 6, 1545) furnishes us with some idea of the care exercised with regard to the provision of meals. "The Dean . . . shall likewise choose a Cook and a Sub-cook, men industrious and of good reputation and upright life, who shall diligently prepare all the provisions and eatables for the table of those feeding in common." "In order that those who assemble together, and together praise God in the Choir, may also eat together and together praise God at table," it was provided that "Minor Canons, Teachers and Boys" should "eat and be fed together at the same time in a common hall," though the choristers appear to have sat at the second dinner with the butler and cook. "The teachers shall rebuke the boys, that all things may be done in the hall with silence, order and decorum." How the food was to be purchased, accounts kept and other matters are fully dealt with in these statutes.

The saying of Grace would not appear to require specifically to be provided for until after the Reformation. In the Statutes of *Westminster School*[1] we

immediately after his consecration as Bishop in St. Mary's Church, Eton, on the site of the college chapel over the foundation-stone laid by his royal master. It may have been his thought which provided that each Eton boy "should make his own bed and sweep the dust from under it." (Wells Cathedral—H. R. Reynolds. Taken from MS. Copy of History of the Church by Nathaniel Chyle, secy. to Bishop Peter Mew circa 1642.)

[1] "Educational Charters and Documents," p. 511.—A. F. Leach, Cambridge University Press, 1911.

find "Three or more of the scholars appointed by the Schoolmaster shall stand before the table in the middle of Hall, one of whom . . . shall begin to say Grace and consecrate the table, and all the rest then present shall say the responses together."

Manners are provided for under the London County Council. The notice following is hung in the Council dining centres:—

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) ACT, 1906.

Rules to be Observed in Connection with the Management of Dining Centres.

(i.) Boys and girls should be selected, preferably by the head teachers, to act as monitors to assist in the laying of the tables and the serving of the meals, and, if necessary, in the clearing of the tables. They should be appointed in the proportion of one to every twenty children. The monitors should have their meals after the other children have all been served.

(ii.) The food should not, as a rule, be served before the children enter the centre.

(iii.) As far as possible the food should be served in such proportions and in such a manner as to suit the ages and requirements of the children.

(iv.) Grace should be said or sung before and after the meal.

(v.) Where two courses are allowed, the second should not be supplied until the first has been eaten. Clean plates must be used for each course.

(vi.) Supervisors of dining centres are to refer cases of bad behaviour, etc., to the secretary of the

care committee of the school at which the child attends, who shall, in the first instance, refer the matter to the head teacher, and in the event of continued misbehaviour, report the whole of the facts to the Children's Care (Central) Sub-Committee. A child should not be punished by being kept without food.

(vii.) Supervisors of dining centres should endeavour to secure that the children partake of the meals with due regard to table manners.

R. BLAIR,
Education Officer.

Education Offices,
Victoria Embankment, W.C.
January, 1911.

The Need for Public Provision of School Meals.

Now that we have embarked upon the Roman experiment and the *pueri alimentarii* are with us, it must be realised at once that the primary cause of this system of school relief is not educational but social. During the past century the nation grew in statistical wealth and importance, but there was no lessening of the number of the poor whose children, having first been given the full advantage of what was termed "education," may now also receive free meals, provided the necessary conditions of destitution and distress be complied with.

An early free meal given in connection with a day school was that offered by John Pounds, the cobbler

of Portsmouth. He was anxious to induce children to attend his school (1803—1839), and in order to do so offered the bribe of a potato.

Within but a year or two of the coming into being of the Elementary School in 1870, Mrs. Burgwin had begun to provide food in her school for necessitous children, and ever since the number of school teachers, mission workers, and charitable folk, actively doing their best to meet the so obvious need, has yearly increased.

In London the municipal interest in meals for school children is officially traceable as follows :—In April, 1876, the Industrial Schools Committee of the London School Board held a conference on "Food for School Children." In 1889 the School Board made inquiry of teachers as to the number of underfed children, and, with a school roll nearly two-thirds of its present size, 55,012 children were said to be in want. A conference followed, out of which grew the London School Dinners Association. In 1894 the School Board appointed a committee "to ascertain the number of children attending school insufficiently fed." The Board then, and again in December, 1905, suggested the formation of Relief Sub-Committees (of the Managers) for necessitous schools. In 1900 the "permanent" Joint Committee on Underfed Children was appointed, and was continued in 1904 when the London County Council took over the School Board. This Committee continued until 1909,

after the Rates were first used (December, 1908) for the Provision of Meals under the Act of 1906.

By the road of Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees came the idea of State provision of meals at the elementary schools. In 1903 the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland), in 1904 the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, and in 1905 the Interdepartmental Committee on Medical Inspection and Feeding, all had something to report on the need for school meals. The Local Government Board issued the Relief (School Children) Order in 1905, but without finding any but occasional support either from Boards of Guardians or Education Authorities. In 1906, after a Select Committee of the House of Commons had reported on it, came

The Education (Provision of Meals) Act.[1]

This Act provides for the feeding of school children who are "unable, by lack of food, to take full advantage of the education provided for them." The Act

[1] Among the Government Reports and Inquiries which preceded the passing of the Act, the following are the most important :—

Report of Interdepartmental Committee on Medical Inspection and Feeding of School Children. Cd. 2779, and evidence, 2784.

Report of Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Cd. 2175.

Special Report of Select Committee, No. 267, and the

Evidence given before the Committee, No. 205.

"Statement of Information collected by the Board of Education and the Foreign Office regarding Methods adopted in Great Continental and American Cities for dealing with Underfed Children." Cd. 2926, 4½*d.*

is so badly drawn that it can only be used on assumptions. If a child were a bottle, or a thermometer, it would be easy to say that when there is only so much liquid in the bottle, or when the temperature falls to so many degrees, then the child must be "unable to take full advantage" of his instruction and his dinner might be ordered. But, thank God, a child is neither of these things, but a child; a child, alas! who may not be able to do his lessons because he went to work too early, or slept in an overcrowded room with closed windows, or smoked too many "fags," or stayed out late at the picture palace, or thought he would run away to sea and so spent the night under an arch near the docks, or had a mind occupied with the delights of the world outside his school, or did not see the use of this schooling anyway. So it has to be assumed the Act means that when a child comes from a home necessitous for food he must be fed—and we talk of "necessitous" children.

The Standard of Necessity.—But what standard of necessity is available? There is the *educational standard* contemplated in the Act. But teachers can only guess at the cause of a child's dulness. In one inquiry it was found that 87 per cent. of the children being fed were first noticed as being necessitous not through their inability to profit by their instruction, but through a note or message brought from their parents; 10 per cent. of the children were fed because

of their apparent need for food. The *physical standard* is equally elusive. The Chief Medical Officer, Board of Education, and the Medical Officer (Education), London County Council, tell us that there is no absolute standard of what is and what is not healthy nutrition.[1] The physical standard was adopted in Brighton, and it was found that, of the children selected by the teachers, 45 per cent. were recommended for free meals; (of the applications made to Care Committees in London, I suppose about 90 per cent. are so recommended). In Bristol it was tried and given up. The *economic or income standard* is again impracticable. It is seldom possible to discover the actual income of a family (this could be borne out by the Income Tax Commissioners!); but if it were, it is much less possible to discover how it is spent. The most necessitous children come from homes where there is a considerable sum spent on drink.[2]

[1] It is of some interest to note that "a Bill to amend the provisions of this Act," and presented to the House of Commons last year (1911) by the Labour Party, is designed "to remove from the Education Authority the final responsibility for saying whether a child is or is not underfed, and to impose that duty upon the school doctor."

[2] (*a*) Report on "The Home Circumstances of Necessitous Children in Twelve Selected Schools," L. C. C. No. 1203 (P. S. King, 1908). It was found that 56 per cent. of the "necessitous" cases were so through the drinking habits of the parents (*Cf.* Tables 2 and 5).

(*b*) "Report on the Physical Condition of 1,400 School Children in the City, together with some account of their homes and surroundings," by the City of Edinburgh Charity Organisation Society (P. S. King, 1906. 5*s*.). It was found that out of 449 families in receipt of charitable relief drink was suspected in 25 cases and known in 282 cases (62 per cent.).

The size of a family is not always an easy factor with which to reckon. There are elder children at work and out of work, and dependents from grand-parents to small babies. Illness is another disturbing factor. Yet, again, there is the *standard of parental responsibility*. Certain Education Authorities have ordered that meals shall not be supplied to children unless their parents apply in person within a specified time (*e.g.*, West Ham and Walthamstow).

None of these standards is either practicable or sufficient in itself. The immediate cause of a child's underfeeding, neglect or disease is in its home. The child in school cannot be dissociated from the child out of school. It is the same child. If its education is to be good, the influence of the home must not be bad. Whether any difficulty in the home is due to the faulty character of the parents, or to industrial and economic conditions over which they have little control, the fact remains that *so long as the child lives with its parents* it is not possible really to improve its condition except by acting through its parents. It has been felt that the family's distress may be relieved to a certain extent by the provision of school meals, but it is doubtful whether the standard of living can be raised by supplementing the family income for any length of time.

It is a fact of Nature that an organ or faculty not used atrophies and declines. It is therefore

dangerous to assist in the removal of any faculty of parenthood, particularly in cases where that faculty has been weakened already.

Educational Meals.—It may be held that were school meals free to all children, as a permissive part of the educational curriculum, the economic difficulty in part would be balanced by the removal of the poverty test. Moreover, when the community decides, as it has, for instance, in the case of the public roads and education, that anything shall be common to all, the individual consciously benefits through communal co-operation. But the State has not so decided in the present case.

Were the communal meal a desirable object in itself, and were the present aim towards that end, there could be no less certain method of attainment than for one section of the community to continue "home" meals for itself, while forcing another, and generally less intelligent section, blindly and easily to accept the principle of communal meals. It deepens still lower the gulf of poverty, and makes it not less easy for the unfortunate to fall therein.

The Act at Work.

And what is actually happening? In London last year (1911) the summer minimum was 25,876, the winter maximum 49,983, children provided with

free meals. In some schools one-third of the children are fed continuously, one-third for five or six months at a regular recurring period each year; the remainder are cases of temporary difficulty.

The large percentage of chronic cases shows that school meals are extending the system of inadequate out-relief. And with what advantage to the children? Several cases have come to my knowledge personally:

(*a*) There was a family from which I used to collect "holiday" monies for three school children. Two years ago the father (always inclined to slack) was out of work. For a fortnight the children were given free meals; his wife went out charing, paying a neighbour to feed the babies at home; the mid-day meal was given up; the man has not been in work since, except for odd jobs; the younger children are very much worse off than the older children ever were; the man lately has been drinking. It would seem that the free food given to the elder children had virtually been taken out of the mouths of the younger.

(*b*) Scene: Printer's shop after strike trouble. Employer angry, offers 21*s*. a week for printer's labourer (former wages 24*s*.). Man is taken on. A trade unionist asks the man how he manages to live. "I couldn't," he says, "except that the kids get fed at school, and the missus gets a day's charing."

Who benefits under that arrangement?

(*c*) A man now earning 15*s*. a week as "milk-boy" has accepted this wage for eight years, and his children have had free breakfasts and dinners at school all the time.

(*d*) Mother usually in jam factory, 9*s*. a week. Father averages two days a week at wharf, 8*s*.; children very neglected and fed at school.

One could quote hundreds of cases similar to this.

Do Children Benefit by School Meals?—These experiences are bound to make one uncomfortable. What of the other side of the picture? Are the children so very much better since they were fed at school? In many cases the answer is Yes; but there are still many teachers unable to say anything so precise. Nevertheless, it may be true that the children from homes where poverty has settled down into a chronic disease, do receive immediate benefit from the regular school meals. But where school meals have been provided for any length of time, no one can point to any improvement in the condition of these homes, while many there be who know that there has been a steady deterioration. The Act is serving, despite its philanthropic motive, to reduce people to poverty through the momentary advantage to their children. It is, alas! another bypath meadow in the demesne of Giant Despair. Moreover, is it not a fact that while children at school may be better able to profit by their instruction

through the provision of school meals, they are also better able to suffer morally through the greater absence of decent home life?

Frankly, I fear that by making poverty more possible, we are perpetuating it and preventing children and parents from rising out of its mire.

If there be a brighter side than that which I now see, for heaven's sake let it be known. If, on the other hand, a mistake has been made, must we not at once set to work to see how it can be remedied?

Could not the £80,000 a year which the meals cost London be spent more constructively?

Care Committees need to remember the difficulties inherent in this Act in order that it may be better understood that the Education Authority is not able to alter certain conditions which appear to be somewhat illogical and inconvenient. The Act has more to do with Poor Relief than education, because the meals are provided for children who are not properly fed at home. The meals are not provided for all children as a lesson in table manners, or to inculcate the communal sense. They are not necessarily provided continuously to the same children, because the circumstances of the parents vary, so that we have "on and off" necessitous children as an unhappy parallel to the family "in and out" of the workhouse, and parents are being, to a certain degree, discouraged from giving proper attention to the food

required by their children because of the school supply.

Still Underfed Children.—Lastly, the Act does not reach all the underfed children, notably those who are absent from school owing to illness, and who would appear to need the food more. There are two classes of parents who will do what they can to keep their children from having school meals. The first is that of the parents who do not like to run the risk of the inquiry involved in having their children fed at the public expense; the second class is that of the parents who struggle to maintain their independence to the last ditch, and hate the thought, as they fear the result, of pauperisation.

It is well to ask ourselves whether it is good for legislation to be framed, as in the case of this Act, to make the low average weekly wage more possible of acceptance, or whether it should not be directed towards increasing the wage-earners' power of independence.

In Mr. Cyril Jackson's book, "Unemployment and Trade Unions,"[1] there is outlined a more acceptable way. Is it not reasonable that the union of working people to control the conditions of their employment should be encouraged, that the policy of the Friendly

[1] "Unemployment and Trade Unions," Cyril Jackson (Longmans), p. 10. "If it is desirable that the workers should unite, it is desirable that any Government measures for the solution of the problem of unemployment should tend to strengthen, extend and improve the trade union organisation."

Societies should be developed so that it becomes less easy for a man to fall behind in his subscriptions and drop out of his union, and often later drop into destitution? Would it not be wiser to prevent this leakage than in small, subtle and plausible ways to attempt to prevent destitution by the means which create destitution?

In the meantime, would it not be possible to escape from the present dangerous position by a temporary compromise? Let milk, porridge and proteid be given freely to any children who like it, or whom the teachers think it would benefit, without discrimination or inquiry or notification to the parents. I am sure that the majority of necessitous children would obtain more food in this way than they do under the present system, because the family meal would again become a necessity.

PART II

SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE

"The flag of one's country is not the symbol of one's real country, with its follies and sins, its politics and trade, but the symbol of one's ideal country, the nation which is as yet nothing but a hope; yet the presence of this symbol of an ideal, this witness of a dream, many a man has found it perdition to be safe and a joy to die."

PROFESSOR PEABODY.

Concerning Social Service.—I imagine that in the Platonic Republic the social service of the road sweeper, or the doctor or the carpenter would be in the excellence of his sweeping, his science or his tables and chairs, that the man who did his own job to the best of his ability would best fulfil the functions of citizenship. In doing so he would be serving his neighbour, which is possibly the beginning and the end of Social Service. It is quite ridiculous to think that a carpenter should need to find any fuller expression of his love for his neighbour than he can find in his carpentry. But his faithfulness in his main job will make his leisure-time service of great value; the more trained and skilled a man is in his own trade the more he will recognise the supreme need for skill and training before undertaking anything so difficult as the social service of to-day, which

means so often interference, however benevolent, in the lives of other people. He will be careful about his actions, opinions and votes, when they affect the lives and characters of others. He will no more attempt to prescribe a remedy for social disease, without consulting someone whose trade it is to deal with the socially sick, than he would attempt to prescribe medicine or to perform an operation on the physically sick. It may be difficult at the present time to say who is trained in this work; there are no academies with Royal Charters and examinations with honourable degrees through which men and women may pass and obtain recognition of their capacity. But though there are the beginnings of these things[1] in the economic courses at our Universities, as at Birmingham, in the School of Sociology and in some offices of the Charity Organisation Society, there are already those who have applied themselves faithfully to the study of the social question, and who are capable of diagnosing individual cases of social disease as effectively on their side as a doctor could on his.[2] The medical and all other professions began in ways similar to that in which the "social worker" now moves towards efficiency and recognition.

Those of us who want to give up our spare time in this Social Service must do our best to discover

[1] Note, Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, Part vii., Chapter xxx., p. 213.

[2] The "Family Straightener" in "Erewhon" (Chapter x.) may now be a dream of Samuel Butler's realised!

these physicians and to let them use us in their work, until gradually we are able to venture a little distance on our own account in the less complicated ways. There are more apothecaries' assistants than Harley Street specialists.

The Function of the State.—The function of the State, as differing from the function of the individual citizen, has been a matter of much controversy. There has been no set law by which the nation has decided that such a service is for collective control while certain other duties are for private enterprise. The public services were first undertaken privately before either their size or importance caused them gradually to be absorbed by the State.

Official Monopoly.—As soon as this absorption has taken place the private citizen ceases to take, except in occasional emergency, any working interest in the particular function which has been nationalised. He leaves it comfortably to the State official. The same result attends, with perhaps a few more exceptions, the similar action of a municipality. If a crime be committed the case is referred to the police, and no one else is expected to assist them in their work except in emergency; when the staff of a daily paper undertakes either the detection of crime or the office of judgeship, the public, though paying for the "news," invariably condemns the system of its production. No one assists as a volunteer postman, nor is there a place for the volunteer tax collector.

Private citizens do not take their turns on the rounds with the dust carts; County Councils do not afford much opportunity in their schools for the voluntary school-master. The State does allow a place for the volunteer soldier but under certain conditions, which, however, must be classed as those of special emergency.

Professional Exclusiveness.—It is not because he is an official of the State or Municipality that we leave the policeman, the postman or the school-master to do his work, without any attempt on our part to relieve him of his duties. The doctor, or lawyer, or engine-driver has his own particular function in the commonwealth, with which the rest of us do not interfere, because we do not pretend to be sufficiently qualified to do so. There are certain differences between the public official and the private expert, but there is no difference in their exclusiveness. The community is run on these lines; it expects to obtain doctoring from the doctor, law from the lawyer, groceries from the grocer; we are too complex in our civilisation to depend upon one man for all three.

State Charity and Private Charity.—There is, however, one function of the community with which citizens have been loth to part with individually, the function of charity. If we have a friend in distress, we use every effort to assist him in avoiding State aid; a fraudulent beggar in the streets excites our

compassion ; though frequently we may degrade that holy gift to the easy giving of a small dole, our motive in giving is not bad. We pay, indeed, for the upkeep of workhouses, but who is there to sympathise with Scrooge in commending the needy to such institutions ? This is so because they are places of despair, and however comfortable they may be made, however humane the officials and however disguised the system of State charity, they are the last assistance a man will wish for his friend. Were our civic nature more developed, it is conceivable that the City Council could so far understand the mystery of holy charity as to be able to undertake the real assistance of those in need. But can this happen until we consider the things of State as a churchman considers the things of the Church—until we approach the ballot-box with reverence, and enter our town hall as though it was a civic cathedral ?

From that ideal we must come back to the fact of the moment, but it is in the hope that we may not lose sight of the ideal that I have put those words of Professor Peabody's at the head of this chapter.

Charity is One.—The problem before us is not to decide how to distinguish between the charity of the community acting through its officials and the charity of the individual acting according to his glorious and impulsive humanity, but how to distinguish between the duties of the officers appointed to assist the needy and the personal obligations

retained by the citizen. Charity must be the same for both.

I venture to differ from Mr. Reginald Bray,[1] who would seem to allow the pioneers to be volunteers only until their enterprise has grown too huge—when it should be taken over by the State. I believe that the State includes the volunteer all the way through, and should use him all the way, and thus encourage personal work to be done by a person. A high officer in the Board of Education, in coming to conclusions similar to those of Mr. Bray, states that "the voluntary helper can thus concentrate on individual cases referred by the school medical officer, cases for whose complete 'following up' *the tapping of sources other than official may be essential*."[2]

The italics are mine. Two conclusions must be drawn from this statement: (1) That the volunteer is to be the useful sink for official leavings; and (2) that the ideal involved is the inclusiveness of the official sources. Will the volunteer be content merely to pick up official failures? Could not the official machinery of cure be avoided, if the official were humble enough to see that people outside the bureaucratic machine (*e.g.*, in the present case, the private practitioner) have had longer experience, and are more qualified to be used than the circumscribed officer of State or Council?

[1] *Cf.* "The Town Child," Chapter iii.

[2] Annual Report, 1910, of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education. Cd. 5925.

The machinery of the community at present is not used by the citizen in distress except as a last resort; between him and the workhouse there is a kind of bulwark, consisting of firstly relations, and secondly private agencies, *e.g.*, those connected with the churches, perhaps a Philanthropic Society or Charity Organisation Society, or a fund left by some charitably disposed person in the past.

The Community is as much interested in the action of all these people as it is in the action of its own officials. In one sense it is more interested, because it is only the cases for which these fail to provide that come to it for assistance. This system has been naturally evolved, and unless we can persuade one another that there is a better system it will continue. Nowhere is there an alternative, because when a man is in trouble (whether it be poverty or illness or the loss of a friend), he will go first for comfort to those that are nearest to him, and after to his church or fraternity of workfellows—the larger community of acquaintances and friends. There is no little strength in this second line in the defence, because, even in its most organised forms, it is maintained by people who give because they care, not because they must. It is a system that has grown up naturally, and it will probably make a firmer foundation for our building than an untried "paper" system, however logical and apparently complete. In any case, the system is at work,

and if you or I want to do anything helpful to anyone to-morrow morning, we shall have to abide by it.

The State and most Difficult Cases.—The present weakness of the system is that the State is left to deal with the worst cases, those which friends, relatives and societies have been unable to assist. Now, as I hope later to show, the Care Committee method is already indicating the way out of the difficulty. That method is to use the first and second lines of defence to their utmost capacity, so that ultimately it shall come about that the State assists all cases through the agency of the people best able to help them. That I do not consider this immediately possible is shown in the ending of this chapter.

Officials to Work through Volunteers.—This means that the officials necessary to the community in the exercise of its gifts of charity, beyond being trained in the knowledge of social disease and of the best remedies available, should be judged not by the number of cases which they receive into their State sanatorium, but by the number which they are able to find a cure for outside its walls. Their salaries and advancement should depend[1] upon the absence of poverty in their districts, so that not only from motives of humanity, but those of self-interest also they might be fighters in the battle against distress and social disease. As will be seen subsequently, the

[1] *Cf.* Bernard Shaw, Preface to "The Doctor's Dilemma."

officers engaged on the Care Committee experiment have duties corresponding with this suggestion. But this is not the only example; the official at the Labour Exchange is engaged to find employment, he does not provide State work. Now there is a new departure in these two services, which bring the volunteer into closer relationship with the official than has obtained previously. The Care Committee and the Juvenile Advisory Committee of the Labour Exchange are committees of volunteers assisted by paid officers. It is not only a recognition by the London County Council, but also by a big Government department of the voluntary principle in matters which affect human interests and social organisation.

What, then, is to be the place of the volunteer? Is he to be given the opportunity to carry on the work which he has already been doing, or is he to watch the official gradually absorb that work into the bureaucratic machine? Is the officer to assist or to control? Knowing something of the nature of an official, I suggest that the volunteer will need to be carefully on his guard. The volunteer is handicapped usually by the fact that he cannot give unlimited time to this work, while the official is always present. Unless the official is honoured, not by the work he does himself, so much as by the work he enables other people to accomplish, this handicap will be a serious one. I think, however, that the voluntary workers can so organise and train themselves as to

maintain their position. Moreover, there are a number of volunteers who are able to give up the greater part of their time to the work, and such might well be used by their fellows to act as their leaders.

Full-Time Voluntary Worker.—"Those who can avoid toil altogether and dwell in the Arcadia of private means . . . have only the higher moral obligation to be up and doing in the interest of man."[1] Earlier on I suggested that the first function of a citizen was to do his own job. There are people so placed at present that they can afford to work without direct pay, receiving indirect pay from rents and dividends. If such undertake "voluntary" service, there is no reason why their service should not be their "job" in as real a sense as if they were paid directly for doing it. Nor is there any reason why it should not command municipal recognition. I think that the voluntary workers, who can give time only after business or office hours, should make the utmost use of their more independent brethren, and that they should show that they expect efficient service and leadership from them, which is probably the surest way to obtain it. I am not speaking primarily of those whom we elect as our representatives on public bodies, after they have teased us for our votes, but of those whose service is given to the community in all kinds of religious, social and

[1] R. L. Stevenson.

political movements and organisations. The number of such "whole-time" workers is not sufficient without considerable reinforcements from the ranks of those whose first duty is to their profession or trade. These people, whose "spare time" is given to the cause which they care about, the children they would save, the men they would reform, the laws they would alter, the gospel they needs must proclaim, make up a force which one is encouraged to believe may yet be turned to better account. For these volunteers are not the inefficient unemployed in their trades, occupying themselves in the wide issues of social reform in order to while away the time; they are men and women whose position in the industrial or professional world is of account. A few instances may make this point clearer:

(1) Solicitor: running a big Mission on the social side, is treasurer, gives minimum two evenings a week and fortnight's camp holiday in summer.

(2) Superintendent of a Borough Council underground lavatory: gives at least three evenings alternate weeks to a club, organises window-box competitions, flower shows, children's bulb shows.

(3) Banker: five if not seven nights a week organising activities connected with his Church and Men's Adult School.

(4) Carpenter (Trade Union Branch Secretary, chief organiser of Labour movement in the district): gives three nights a week to Care Committee, visiting in

connection with Juvenile Employment, and one night a week to Juvenile Advisory Committee.

(5) Doctor: Sunday School superintendent, honorary consultant to three charitable agencies, Chairman of Care Committee meeting weekly.

(6) Ironmonger: Churchwarden, Sunday School Superintendent, Men's Social Club (two nights).

Women have been omitted from this list, as it is sufficient to say that the most able are to be found in the ranks of the voluntary workers.

These people are but a few among many who happen to be known to me; there are thousands like unto them. It may be said, in spite of some exceptions,[1] that a man or woman who is not much good at his or her daily job will not be big enough to undertake social work.

Therefore in the voluntary worker we have someone doubly qualified to serve the community; he is a good worker at his work and he really cares for his kind.

The community fails to make the best use of this voluntary service, in that it does not yet recognise that more people are engaged in Home Defence than the Territorial warrior. The existence of the School Care Committee and of the Juvenile Advisory Committees of the Board of Trade is evidence that this recognition is beginning to be made. As this recognition develops there should come, not only a sense of

[1] *E.g.*, Those who allow their spare-time interest to take precedence over their ordinary occupation because their real work does not happen to be the City office or the grocery store.

greater responsibility in voluntary service,[1] so that the volunteer equips himself by regular training[2] and clear thinking, but also a definite official policy of respect for this service, which should be manifested by the assistance rendered to the volunteer, not by the absorption of his work in the official machine.

The officer is at once the menace to and the hope of the accomplishment of such a scheme. If he works for advancement according to the increasing number of his subordinate officers, his personal interest is in an increase of the demand for State assistance;[3] if his administrative capacity is gauged by the amount of work he can do himself rather than by the amount he is able to call out in others, if his idea of success is to retain power in his own hands rather than speed it forth to strengthen others—then not only is the voluntary system destroyed, but any other effective remedy to the present social condition is also foredoomed to failure. That this danger is no shadowy invention of my own may be discovered in the entirely efficient systematic and official distribution of school

[1] *Cf.* "Charity and Social Life."—C. S. Loch (Macmillan), p. 463.

[2] *Cf.* "Children's Care Committees."—Margaret Frere, Chapter viii.

[3] As an indication of this official outlook the following quotation is illuminating:—"In A.D. 270 the Emperor Aurelian, in writing to Arabianus, the Public Commissary-General, says: 'Of all the good deeds which by the favour of the immortal Gods I have wrought for the Commonwealth none is more splendid than this, that I have increased the distribution of corn to every citizen by one *uncia*.'" ("Italy and her Invaders."—Th. Hodgkin, p. 570.)

meals at Bradford. An American student came to see me after a visit to that city. I am content to use her words: "I cannot understand what is happening in this country. I was in Bradford and was told that 2,000 children were being fed away from their homes because there was not enough for them to eat there. I was taken to a dining centre, where some 200 of the children were seated at the midday meal. It seemed to me the most terrible experience I had ever been through; but I was amazed to see not shame but pride on the face of my official guide. He looked as though he would be really glad were another 2,000 children destitute enough to come to his splendid kitchen!"

The State as a Last Resort.—Whatever may happen in the future, however much the system of private assistance may be strengthened by the further use of the volunteer, and however careful the direction of official pressure, there is in our midst the present problem of the destitute. Moreover, in our most optimistic moments we do not suppose that the heritage of this destitution will quickly disappear. It is not for me to say in what manner those now in the mire of distress shall be dealt with when so many wiser and more experienced people have struck hard against the rock of disagreement. I can only venture to ask that one test be applied to any scheme we may be called upon to consider: Will it give to the person it is designed to help a better chance of standing on his own feet, add to his

responsibility and *expect* that he will meet the demands to be made upon him?[1] I have a case in mind of a clerk who was dismissed from a good business house for slackness in the matter of punctuality. A friend found him a place in another office, where he remained for three years, being finally dismissed for a petty theft. The friend gave him private secretarial work until a relative found him his fourth place, from which he was discharged for drunkenness. Incidentally it was not discovered until then, even by his wife, that drink had been the growing trouble for six years. His friends had warned him that if this fourth place failed he could expect no more assistance from anyone and that the workhouse alone would remain. They kept to this resolution. After three weeks of pawn-tickets he secured a job, by his own exertions entirely, and has stuck to it since. I know something of the sacrifice which that man caused his friends. I know that the hardest sacrifice was to withdraw all help, even though the wife and children were bound to suffer; but I know that the man was saved by it. This is no isolated case. Two conclusions must force themselves upon us in considering it. The first is that there must be a last resort; the man's friends could not have refused help unless there had been some last "haven for the derelicts." The second is that had his wife been able to earn a few shillings a week, and his

[1] *Cf.* Poor Law Commission, Part ix. (17).

children been able to obtain free meals at school (as it happens, the parents were too proud to ask for them), the man would now be on the scrap heap. It is clear to me that if the State is called upon to assist cases of this kind it must help the whole family and remove them entirely out of the ordinary channel of industrial life.

The system of relief which appears to have enjoyed the support of all members of the Poor Law Commission is the Labour Colony.[1] But the majority of the Commissioners consider that these colonies "should be available for a very different class from that which is commonly found in a workhouse," and recommend detention colonies for those who neglect to maintain themselves or their families. I cannot pretend to be competent to criticise these suggestions properly, but I feel that a system of insurance within the Trade Unions and the extension of Friendly Societies[2] would obviate the necessity for many experiments in "voluntary" labour colonies; while no one who has worked on a Care Committee will, I imagine, have any doubt as to the need for detention colonies. If the nearly and quite unemployable were taken clear out of the labour market, with their families, and so placed that they had a chance of again learning to labour, they would not assist, as is

[1] Poor Law Commission, Part vi., Chapter iv. (F), and Separate Report, Chapters iv. (E), vi. Also note "Unemployment and Trade Unions," Cyril Jackson, p. 18.

[2] *Cf.* "Unemployment and Trade Unions."—Cyril Jackson.

so often the case, to drag down those immediately above them.

It is with considerable diffidence that I make these latter suggestions; but they appear to be called for, if only to prove the limitations of a book concerned with the care of children.

PART III

DIFFICULTIES OF VOLUNTARY AND OFFICIAL CO-OPERATION

Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant.—TACITUS.

Aquæ istæ quæ egrediuntur ad tumulos sabuli orientalis, et descendunt ad plana deserti, intrabunt mare, et exibunt; et sanabuntur aquæ. Et omnis anima vivens, quæ serpit, quocumque venerit torens, vivet.—Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9.

THERE is a legend, usually remembered and quoted in easy verse, of which the heroine journeys forth upon some strange quest, riding upon the back of a tiger. We hear the popular acclaim as she starts forth through the city gates; we see mothers snatching back their children from the roadway, distrustful of this new philanthropy; we observe the bold cheers from those safe on the city wall. Then do we feel the silence fall on the crowd as the strange pair are swallowed up in the forest. . . . Towards the evening we witness, with a shudder, the stealthy, silent stepping of a sleepy tiger as he slinks home again through the outer gates of the city.

When the London County Council formulated the Care Committee system, a system based upon co-operative effort between the free voluntary worker

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and the bound salaried official, there were those who foretold the speedy return of the official beast without his companion. These pessimists have not yet been justified; nevertheless it is early in the Care Committee life—the dangers which existed four years ago may indeed have been modified, but they are not removed.

The School Care Committee shows in what manner the work of the official and that of the volunteers may be combined. It is important to consider some of the difficulties inherent in this co-operative system. The first is that which is usually known as "red tape." An official is responsible to a public body for his smallest action; it would be unnatural were he not to become dependent upon rules and regulations. This develops an interdependence among officers, and the belief among them that an official can do no wrong. The official is trained to carry out instructions, to observe the letter of the law, and to be carefully suspicious of its spirit, to assume that the decision of the Council in one case must apply to every case, though no two are ever alike.

The example of the school managers was before the Council. These had become content to approve or disapprove mildly of official activity (the brilliant exceptions are not forgotten): they did not seek to control or to advance the powers which might have been their own.

It is unfortunate that school teachers are public

officials, and that they are made to conform, however much many may hate the conformity, to the curious official standard which has somehow been set up.

During the winter of 1906-7, after which the London County Council became officially responsible for the provision of school meals, a reported maximum of 30,636[1] children were fed, and the teachers (who had been feeding children for years) might almost be said to have done the work involved off their own bat. It has become a commonplace to praise the self-sacrifice of the elementary school teacher, and therefore I will be content to let the foregoing facts speak for themselves. But teachers and school managers almost unavoidably learn to accept children and their few hours a day at school as a kind of social unity. The larger life outside the school becomes a vague, if grim, unreality. Parents seem as shadows constantly changing, a certain but often unsatisfactory agency for the production of material for school use. Teachers are restless about them. Why do not they keep their children more clean ; why is that child sleepy at ten in the morning, and this child so pinched looking ? A teacher must make his school or class attractive, otherwise his work becomes dull both to

[1] A large number of schools (non-provided particularly) were feeding necessitous children without sending in returns, so that this figure does not represent actual numbers of children fed.

him and to his pupils, and as dulness comes the chance of promotion goes. The simplest form of attraction is that of gifts; that in the long run it is the weakest weighs not at the moment—for are not the immediate results satisfactory? The weak teacher (and the weak parent also) does not hesitate to use any little bribe which opportunity affords; if the children enjoy school meals, surely they may. If a supply of boots encourages attendance, why should boots be withheld (and are not many little feet sorely in need of them)? Although this is undoubtedly a pitfall, it is not to be assumed that the majority fall into it. In one school, to which went children from the poorest and most destitute part in Islington, I was astounded to observe all the children well dressed—there was not a rag to be seen. A careful investigation was subsequently made of the homes,[1] and these were distinctly cleaner than the average necessitous home. This state of affairs was simply due to one headmaster, who had been at this school for twenty-five years, and had decided that rags and dirty faces should not be. If a child had a torn coat, or an ill-fitting garment or a dirty face, he was sent home or to the lavatory, or given, in school, a needle and cotton to repair the damage himself.[2]

[1] Report on twelve selected schools, L.C.C., No. 1203.

[2] *Cf.* also report by Dr. Badger (School Medical Officer, Wolverhampton), quoted p. 98, Annual Report for 1910 of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education. Cd. 5925.

There is one illustration from the treatment of the child in school which will serve to show the danger in official methods. The hopes which Mr. Forster and his friends had for education have not yet been realised. Many people qualified to express an opinion tell us that State education has failed as education, while most of us know that it has not solved the problem of poverty as our fathers were persuaded it would. May not one potent cause for this be due to the officialism, which would do everything itself on thoroughly "efficient lines." Has not the school been shut away from the home,[1] so that *the parents have become spectators of official activity?* "It is unfortunate," writes Mr. Alexander Paterson, "that the only times when parents and teacher meet are, as a rule, occasions of mutual blame and recrimination."

This has to be changed. Care Committees have begun to assist in the change. One day the cricket match between the Ben Jonson and the Hugh Myddleton elementary schools must kindle as much enthusiasm among the relatives of the children as the Eton and Harrow contest calls forth at Lord's. The health, employment and recreation of children give to the Care Committee the power to bring back the parent into the educational system, not as a discouraged spectator, but as an interested co-operator.

Absence of Official Guidance.—The most curious

[1] *Cf.* "Across the Bridges."—Alexander Paterson (Arnold), Chapter vii.

difficulty which existed at the threshold of Care Committee formation was the lack of any clear definition of the duties which the voluntary workers were to be asked to undertake. This deficiency was due, in the main, to the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, which has already been considered. Certain organisers[1] were appointed to assist Care Committees to arrive at some working arrangement.

The "Party" Question.—It is curious that the Care Committee, possibly the only public committee free from the taint of party politics, should have first been recognised during the fierce war between those who would provide food to necessitous children from voluntary funds and those who demanded the use of the rates for the same purpose. There are few Committees not made up of more than one political element, and yet it would be difficult to discover six Committees in the whole of London where this has led to disunion. It would be a sad day for Care Committees when men and women should find themselves considering not the needs of the particular child before them, but the policy expected of them by a party "machine."

[1] Organisers of Care Committees are a new class of officials, of which there are some thirty working in London at the present time. Their function is to help other people to work without doing the work themselves. If they succeed in maintaining this detachment, they may become the most useful of public servants; if they forget, the most serious public menace. Voluntary work cannot live if it is at the beck and call of officials, or becomes, obversely, merely a benignant supervision of official activity.

Variety in Voluntary Work.—The last difficulty was, and is, in the absence of any known standard of voluntary work. There was the Committee member, content to think only of the child's stomach, to be satisfied with the filling thereof on the five school days, trusting to luck as to what would happen on the remaining two days of the week. There was the one whose soul sought satisfaction in the punishment of neglectful parents—such receives little to sustain him. There was he who would organise a whole social scheme within the school walls, so that a child could invest its parents' savings, purchase boots, clothing and country holiday on the instalment plan, and take up its membership in social, swimming and other clubs. There was the easy philanthropist, who would have food, milk, cod-liver oil, boots, clothing, medical treatment and baths free, as the sun and air are free; and there was his opposite, who believed that these things should be the parents' privilege to give, and that every available pressure should be brought to bear on the parents to insure their provision. Lastly, there were those who appeared to believe in all these conflicting theories. In the evening they would demand higher wages and better conditions of employment, on the morrow proceed to the school to dole out free meals and clothes and holidays, so that there were fewer people to want the higher wages and more who could manage to live without regular work.

From this strange medley of conflicting interests and beliefs the Care Committees were moulded.

Now, nearly four years later, there are over 5,000 members of Children's Care Committees in London, and though with approximately the same number of conceptions of what Care Committee work is or should be, yet they have a growing corporate life and a continually advancing standard of what needs to be done.

PART IV

THE CARE COMMITTEES UNDER THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL—VOLUNTARY AND OFFICAL DUTIES

THE Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, was in one sense the parent of the Care Committee. It was obvious that, if a child were sent to school lacking food, there must be something seriously at fault in his home. It is horrible to think of a child needing but unable to get sufficient food, and no one caring for the child could be content merely to feed him and allow the conditions which caused the underfeeding to exist without an attack upon them.

The Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, and later the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, impose on the Education Authority the duty of linking up its work with that already carried on voluntarily,[1] in order that all the public and private forces available should be directed towards the assistance of the children.

The London County Council decided, therefore, to build upon the existing voluntary foundations—

[1] Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1 (a); Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 13 (b).

to ask, that is, for the co-operation of those who had already attempted, and were attempting, to meet the need which Parliament had recognised.

The Council has attempted to work through the volunteer because so much that needs to be done for the children could not be accomplished officially;[1] partly because the improvement of the people, which is the basis of Care Committee work, cannot be imposed from without, but must develop from within; and partly because, with the many existing public and private agencies for relief, the first steps have to be towards the perfecting of system and administration, in order to see what help is needed and how best it can be applied.

Care Committee Organisation.—The London County Council sent invitations to most, if not all, of the many societies and agencies which exist in London in the cause of philanthropy. The Children's Country Holiday Fund, Invalid Children's Aid Association, Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants (M.A.B.Y.S.), Almoners of the Society for Relief of Distress, Charity Organisation Society, and the Settlements were asked to nominate workers.

It is important to note how wide was the appeal,

[1] Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, Separate Report, Chapter iv. (D.): "What is required is the steady and continuous guidance of a friend, able to suggest in what directions effective help can be obtained. . . . Such an organisation for systematic friendly visiting can, we think, only be supplied by voluntary effort."

and how the usual sad difficulty of party, in a political sense, was splendidly overcome.

The names thus collected formed what was called an "approved list" of voluntary workers. From this the school managers were empowered to select two (or three, according to the number of selected managers) members. These formed two-thirds of the Committee, and the remaining one-third was nominated direct by the Children's Care (Central) Sub-Committee (then known as the Sub-Committee for Underfed Children).

The Care Committee thus established was new only in name and in its "statutory" significance.[1] In a number of schools "Relief" Committees had been providing food and clothing for destitute children since 1896.

Care Committees are thus constituted for each elementary school. For administrative purposes groups of these Committees, within the Metropolitan Borough areas, send representatives to *the Local Associations of Care Committees*,[2] which have duties at present principally with regard to the details of feeding arrangements (dining halls, supply and service of food), but with growing supervisory functions which are of no little importance in Care Committee development.

[1] The first "Care" Committee to be attached to a public elementary school was that organised by Miss Margaret Frere in 1896, at Great Tower Street, Seven Dials.

[2] There are twenty-seven Local Associations, whose areas correspond in nearly all cases with those of the Borough Councils.

It is being discovered that the school unit for social purposes is inconvenient. Children from one family frequently attend different schools. A family living in one borough, and subject therefore to the rules of that Health Committee, in receipt of relief perhaps from the Board of Guardians, has to be considered locally, whether the children attend at a school within or without the borough. Care Committees send usually their more energetic members to serve on the Local Association, so that this body tends to become the local power-house of the movement, while the Council recognises its importance in appointing a paid secretary to serve on the clerical side.

Care Committee Duties.[1]

(1) *School Meals.*—The selection of necessitous children for whom free meals were to be provided was the first duty of the Care Committee.

This function has already been discussed in connection with the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906. The usual procedure before a child is officially placed on the dinner list may, however, be outlined. The parent sends a note or a message to the teacher, who allows free meals if he considers the

[1] "Children's Care Committees," by Margaret Frere (P. S. King & Son, 1*s.*), explains these duties in greater detail and more attractively than is attempted to do in this volume. See also the London Council Council "Handbook Containing General Information with Reference to the Work in Connection with the Children's Care (Central) Sub-Committee" (P. S. King, 6*d.*).

child in need, and reports the case to the Care Committee secretary; the parent is summoned to attend the school, and his statement is taken down on a form; thereafter the home is visited and inquiries are made (*e.g.*, from the Relieving Officer). The reports are submitted to the Care Committee, and if so decided, the school meals are allowed. The teacher is notified of this decision, and daily hands the child a ticket for entrance to the dining centre (*cf.* procedure at Durham School in the twelfth century, p. 3).

(2) *Medical Treatment.*—It is not at the moment possible to say what the exact functions of Care Committees will be in this matter. At the beginning the Committee was responsible for seeing that children found, at the school inspection, to be in need of treatment obtained that treatment.[1] In the first place, the parent was to be given the opportunity to obtain this through the "family doctor" or in other ways. Then the London County Council stepped in with special arrangements at hospitals and a continually increasing number of medical-treatment centres, while children ordered "home" care by the treating doctors were commended to a nursing association.

[1] See Annual Report for 1909 of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, pp. 80, 82 and 83. "Following up medical inspection" is (he reports) one of the "chief directions in which the value of a Care Committee is indisputable."

The medical-treatment centres are virtually local hospitals for school children suffering from minor diseases of the ear, nose, throat and eyes, and are managed by local doctors (organised through the British Medical Association). The system has not altogether satisfied those who consider that school clinics under the direct control of the Education Authority would achieve better results. For some time it was not clear what was meant by a school clinic. Some appeared to believe that a small hospital could be erected in the school playground; others that a glorified lavatory and a nurse would be sufficient, provided that the hospitals and medical-treatment centres were sufficiently numerous to deal with all cases needing operations. This last view is now more generally adopted. But it has one supreme danger which should not be overlooked.

There is a clear need for nursing treatment for minor ailments and to follow operations. The school clinic would provide this at the school, and in doing so the great opportunity now given to Education Authorities to carry out preventive treatment would be thrown away, because with a little more trouble and a little more organisation this treatment can be given in the home, even in the worst one-roomed home. The gain in sending a nurse into a home of this kind is enormous. She goes not only to attend the child but to instruct the mother, to make her clean a basin which perhaps has never

been clean, to keep dressings decently fastened, to open windows. The nurse also sees babies and infants not yet at school. This home treatment is being carried out in parts of London with splendid success; it has only to be linked up with the Health Societies and the Medical Officer of Health to become the most powerful system for preventing dirt and disease which has ever been formulated. The school clinic, where the mothers are invited to witness the work of the nurse, who has every latest appliance at hand to assist her, means little to the mother and not a great deal to the child, who is sent back, indeed more clean and more healthy, to live in exactly the same conditions which produced, and will again produce, disease and dirt. It is merely self-deception for the clinic doctor to report such a child as "cured."

If Care Committee work is to be complete it must be merged in that of the Health Society, so that the visitor of the one becomes the same person who visits for the other.

(3) *The Employment of Children on Leaving School.*— The last addition to the work of the Care Committee has been to co-operate with the Juvenile Advisory Committee,[1] which the Board of Trade has established in connection with each Labour Exchange. This involves the systematic attention to the future of every child leaving school, so that the parents

[1] "Unemployment and Trade Unions."—Cyril Jackson, p. 66.

and the child may know at least what kind of future there is in any job which they may select, and that they may have as wide a choice of jobs as possible, so that the tendency to take the first which turns up may be combated. It cannot mean that no child shall be allowed to enter a "blind alley," but it should mean that where this happens the parents and children know exactly what is in front of them, and that every effort will be made to prepare the child for better work, so that he may escape over the wall now at the end of the alley. It should mean where parents are deficient in the parental qualities of foresight and affection, or where they are criminal and neglectful, that there should be found someone (a club manager, for instance) who, for three or four years, will watch over and protect the child and supply from without what is lacking within the home. The duty of the Care Committee, representing the educational side, is to see that, where necessary, children are commended to the care of such people. It is also their duty to see that a report on the capacity (both educational and economic) of the child is carefully prepared for the time when he leaves school. The Juvenile Advisory Committee, on the other hand, has to see that the conditions of employment are as good as possible, that all is done to improve them, and that the "round" children get into "round" holes. "It is the ignorance of the boy which so often leads him

into employment which is not suited to him,"[1] and the Advisory Committee may save him from this mistake.

(4) *Recreation.*—A number of Care Committees have given this subject particular attention. They have actively co-operated with the Children's Country Holiday Fund in selecting the right children for the holiday, collecting the payments, and attending to the other details of the organisation. In most parts of London this co-operation is assured, for the Children's Country Holiday Fund visitor is usually a member of the School Care Committee.

In some schools play centres and happy evenings have either been started through Care Committee activity, or materially assisted by its additional enthusiasm. At other schools small Saturday excursions have been arranged to museums or parks. New clubs for boys and girls have been started. When the Care Committee organisation has attained to a greater power and more unity there should be an effective agitation for more playing fields and other facilities for open-air enjoyment.

(5) *Neglected Children.*—In order to understand the difficulty which exists in prosecuting parents who

[1] "Report on Boy Labour."—Cyril Jackson. Poor Law Commission; also note memorandum of Mr. B. Paul Neuman incorporated in the report. He says: "I am quite sure a very great deal could be done in the direction of fitting the right-shaped boys into their appropriate holes, if competent workers would begin to make friends of the lads while they are still at school."

neglect their children, an account of one case taken into court will save many words. The child (girl, aged seven) was reported by school nurse and school doctor to be verminous and showing signs of great neglect. Nurse gave evidence of vermin in head, body and clothes; sores on head running with vermin. In spite of repeated warnings, no improvement had been shown. The doctor stated he had examined the child; she was verminous, her body was very thin, her weight 28 lbs. (one stone under the average weight of a child of seven); he saw no disease to account for this. Evidence of neighbours (obtained with much difficulty, they were fetched in motor cabs at last moment) was produced to the effect that parents returned home very late at night, their child with them, and that they were often the worse for drink. Married daughter called for the defence stated parents were unfortunate, father often out of work, but she admitted that they drank too much. Son-in-law gave evidence to same effect. The charge of neglect against the father was dismissed, the woman was bound over in security of £5 to come up for judgment within six months. Three months later a visit to the home was made at nine in the evening; the child was in bed. The visitor turned down the clothes and reported to me that she had never seen "so many vermin in one place before."

In what way has the child received benefit through the action taken in this case? But had the magistrate

been more severe, had the parents been sent to prison and the child been allowed a blissful existence (as it would have been compared with that in her home) for three months in the workhouse—what then? Are there many people who emerge from their enforced hiding-place in His Majesty's gaols better able to keep a home together, more filled with the milk of human kindness, than when they went in?

While we grumble, as we must, at the often seeming impossibility to punish neglectful parents, it is well to ask ourselves whether the kind of punishment which they get will, in the end, have improved either the chance of the child or the humanity of the parents.

Perhaps we have given up the law, except to use it in exemplary cases when the punishment of one may stay the hands of other unsatisfactory parents. We feel that a few successful cases in court exercise a wholesome deterrence on the neighbourhood; that if A. is punished for extreme neglect, then B., who is nearly as bad, will learn caution. I wonder if this is not pure nonsense? How many neglectful parents really understand what is meant by neglect? How many are shamed or caused to be made more careful by the terrible punishment awarded to A.? What experience I have had of neglectful parents would not enable me to place much belief in the gospel of fear, for the simple reason that *the parents have not known what was neglect;* vermin are looked upon as

something coming like the rain, unpleasant, perhaps, but inevitable.

The "Neglect" Problem.—A report of the Children's Aid Association of Leicester is interesting in this connection: "During 1907-8 twenty-seven families were sent on to the N.S.P.C.C., but in the past year only one family was referred to that Society. *The regular visitation of the families by the voluntary workers is responsible for this improvement.*"

My own experience confirms this report. I have been connected with a club for working men for a number of years in which there are few sermons preached, a pledge-book could not be found on the premises, and men go very much their own gait; but women have nevertheless come to thank me for the return of their husbands, and mothers have blessed me (though it had so little to do with me) for the salvation of their sons. Why? Because in the club there was plenty going on, more to attract the spare energy in the men than the public-house could offer; and a man needs must love the highest when he sees it, even if the altitude is no dizzy one.

The "neglect" case cannot usually be solved in any way other than that of personal service. The Children Act (sections 12 (1) and 58 (1)) is of use in the clear case of neglect or immorality, but as so many of the worst cases are not clear, the Care Committee worker is inclined to despair about its efficacy. The difficulty is that there is a wide gap between what is obvious to the worker, who knows the family, and

what can be made obvious to a magistrate. The law demands well-substantiated evidence; and will not, in practice, accept a case as neglected where, owing to the provision of school meals and charitable gifts of clothing, the children appear to be in a better condition than they really are; neither can the law be satisfied with a "moral certainty" unless there are material evidences to support it.

(6) *Inquiry.*—The need for inquiry may be shown in the history of one failure. The mother, called by courtesy a widow, was addicted to drink; she had two daughters. The elder left school, and a satisfactory place in a factory was found for her by the Care Committee, who knew of the difficulties in the home. The mother had applied to a public body (not the Labour Exchange) for relief work, and was given a job some distance from her home; this body made no kind of inquiry. The woman being at work, it was necessary for her daughter to leave the factory, where she had been well occupied, in order to attend to the home, where she was only partly employed in dressing her sister for school and preparing meals. She was thrown into the undesirable society of her mother's acquaintances, and she gave birth to an illegitimate child before she was sixteen. Had the Care Committee been consulted this tragedy might have been avoided.

This case also illustrates the point that where the State touches a family it should do all that is required or nothing.

Inquiry does not consist in recording the state-

ments of parents, though this, carefully done, is of no little value. I remember interviewing a man who had eighteen children. I began to ask him about them; he felt anxiously in his coat pockets and said: "I am sorry, sir; I keeps a list of 'em for these occasions, but I've left it at 'ome." A careful man! In one sense this statement conveyed his history, but it did not explain why all his grown children, though at work, apparently refused to help their parents.

Further, inquiry does not consist in the questioning of children as to the condition of their parents (a distressing practice which now, thank heaven, has almost ceased).

Inquiry need not be an inquisition in the home; frequently it involves but a visit to the Mutual Registration Society in order to find out, to whom the case is already known. I know of one family visited from fifteen different societies in one month; one wants to avoid being the sixteenth. The Mutual Registration Society offers us a way of escape from this duplication of visits; it saves the parents from much worry and relief agencies from some fraud.

(7) *Home Visits.*—It is not perhaps sufficiently realised how serious is the responsibility of a home visit. While it is stimulating to catch something of the enthusiasm which is being put into Care Committee work, and to see how much home visiting is undertaken, there is an actual danger that this may be entered upon too lightly. It is a serious business for one person to meddle in the life affairs of another,

none the less so when some kind of interference appears to be called for. The helpfulness of the home visit will not be lessened if this responsibility is felt more keenly. "There was never an ill thing made better by meddling."[1]

Official Duties.

The Administrative Officer at the head of a Government Department or a County Council Administration is a composite person with varying voices, whose name covers the shortcomings, as well as the good deeds, of many unknown clerks, inspectors, organisers and school attendance officers. In London, for instance, the Care Committee worker speaks with the Education Officer when he sees the Divisional Superintendent about a case of child neglect or "recovery of cost"; he listens to his voice through that of the secretary of the Local Association, while he hears it on his Care Committee echoing in the mild utterance of a lady organiser.

The officers engaged in Care Committee work in London, beyond the statisticians and letter writers at the central office, are many. There are over thirty officers, mostly women,[2] in the "organising" branch of the work; there are the twelve correspondents of school managers acting, with necessary juniors, as secretaries to the twenty-seven Local Associations of Care Committees, and there are twelve "special"

[1] R. L. Stevenson.

[2] See note on p. 55.

officers to investigate cases about which the Care Committees are in doubt.

Not one of these officers can point to a clear definition by the Council of the meaning of the Care Committee, its object, its place in the social scheme of things; the principles underlying Care Committee work have never been formulated into a precise doctrine by the people responsible for their adoption. The lack of a known policy is unavoidable while so much uncertainty exists as to the future of the Poor Laws. It explains, however, why official duties may sometimes be ambiguous.

The Education Officer, through various officials, carries out the instructions of the Council, and advises its sub-committees on points ranging from the supply of a mug at a dining centre to the policy of co-operation between the Council and the Board of Trade in the matter of juvenile labour. These advisory and executive functions descend through all the ranks of officers connected with the "care" work.

Though the advice of officials is important, their executive functions are more so; and these in the Care Committee system are limited.

(1) *School Meals.*—The selection of the children is in the hands of the Care Committee; the food is not supplied directly by the Council, but by contract with caterers. The teachers keep the record of children to whom dinner tickets are given, the paid (and some voluntary) supervisors and helpers see to the service

of the meal, while the bills are paid through the secretary of the Local Association.

The school attendance officers deliver Form 91, which informs the parent that his child is receiving school meals and explains his liability.

(2) *Medical Treatment.*—The school doctors, assisted by the school nurses, inspect the children; but the treatment has so far been carried out not by Council doctors, but through the general practitioner, hospitals and medical-treatment centres, as explained on p. 63. Certain officers on the organising staff assist in regulating the supply of children at those hospitals paid by the Council to treat school children and by informing Care Committees of "following-up" treatment ordered by the doctor. These officers are responsible for seeing that no case is allowed to fall through until treatment has been completed.

(3) *The Employment of Children* on leaving school is not the direct business of any officer of the Council, with the exception of the inspectors of trade schools, but these schools are not represented in the Care Committee experiment.

(4) *Recreation*, other than that so often undertaken voluntarily by the teachers, has no official to direct it.

(5) *Neglected Children* are referred to the N.S.P.C.C. through the Divisional Superintendent of Attendance Officers.

(6) *Inquiry* in baffling cases is undertaken by a special official from the School Attendance

Staff, and also by district organisers and their assistants.

The organisers' duties,[1] except those mentioned above, are first of an advisory nature; they report also on the work of Care Committees when the Council requires a report, and they are generally responsible, under the Education Officer, for seeing that the regulations made by the Council are carried out. When a Care Committee breaks down through lack of numbers, these officers endeavour to keep the work going until they have found new people to undertake it.

It will be seen by comparison of these two lists of duties that the responsible work of Care Committees is on the voluntary and not the official side.

Line to be Drawn between Official Duty and Voluntary Help.

With some idea of the nature and responsibilities of Care Committees and the officials, it is more possible to indicate the manner of co-operation possible between them.

A point needing careful consideration is the limit of autonomy possible to a voluntary committee not directly responsible to the ratepayer. However imperfect the Care Committee system, it does afford us sufficient experience upon which to calculate.

The ratepayers send their representatives to Spring Gardens; there the rules are formulated. If the

[1] See note on p. 55.

volunteer undertakes to play in the game, the problem becomes a matter of discernment on one side and loyalty on the other. Discernment involves a knowledge of the best things which are being done; and Care Committees should be more directly represented at the Centre than through the officials or by means of the half-yearly conferences of chairmen of Local Associations which now take place. Though the Care Committees may be said themselves to have framed the rules which now appear in the official "Handbook," there is no guarantee, in the present system, that such initiative shall find its proper expression in the future. Managers have failed because they followed and did not lead; Care Committees will succeed in so far as they remain pioneers.

The officials come, or should come, into the game as referees and linesmen. There is seldom room for both professional and amateur in the same team. With the advent of the professional the game becomes a spectacle. Care Committees must be careful to play, not to watch the game. Officers are not yet heaven-sent messengers; they are public servants paid to serve. It is vitally important to demand the right kind of service from them; one can rely upon their faithfulness.

It is important to know where the activity of one should end and that of the other should begin. It is perhaps easy to say that officials should be provided

to do the drudgery, organise and arrange meetings, keep minutes and records, and undertake police-court duties, in order that the volunteer may be free to follow on with the constructive work. It is clear, I think, that prosecution and anything to do with the police-court should be an official, and only an official, duty; it is clear, also, that the Council should carefully design the Care Committee machinery, and supply certain officers to make the working of that machinery as simple and effective as possible. It should also be clear to the voluntary worker that the Council must have some supervision and control over committees having responsibilities for the expenditure of public money in connection with the provision of meals and medical treatment. But it would not be possible to continue an effective voluntary system were the Council to be responsible for more than the framework. It is sometimes assumed that inquiry into the condition of the home is disagreeable work which might be left to the officers, but parents are human beings and cannot be treated as items on a case paper. It is impossible to help a family without knowing the cause of its trouble, and this cannot be known without inquiry—an inquiry which can only be properly made by the person who is anxious to set the family on its feet. Inquiry in the majority of cases must be work in which the Care Committee worker will be too interested to give it up, because it is too vital.

PART V

THE FUTURE OF CARE COMMITTEES

"If the poor and humble toil that we have Food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he have Light, have Guidance, Freedom, Immortality? . . . Unspeakably touching is it, however, when I find both dignities united; and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest. . . . Such a one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendour of Heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of earth, like a light shining in great darkness."—THOMAS CARLYLE.

THE feeding of necessitous children, the medical inspection and treatment of children, and the supervision of children in the first years of employment after leaving school, are opportunities which enable us to gauge the power now placed in the hands of the Education Authority. That power will be better used if its limits are understood. We cannot altogether look upon children as a separate part of the social problem, while, during their school years, they spend *one-sixth of their lives only at school.* The mistake made with regard to cleansing verminous children is the best illustration of an error which can be made through too narrow an "educational" outlook. Children are cleansed by the Education Authority and allowed to return to their vermin-

infected homes![1] Although these cases are now reported to the Borough Medical Officers of Health, it is clear that the function of cleansing should be entirely in their hands.

Dirt should be a notifiable disease; it would not matter if the school authority were to notify more cases than any other authority. The example previously given of the influence of one schoolmaster in a corner of Islington shows how the teachers and Care Committee could co-operate with the Medical Officer of Health. Indeed, if Care Committees are to succeed, is not here the line of their success—to be quite determined that certain material troubles, like dirt, are unnecessary, and can be abolished?

But there is one law in social work which has to be understood before any worker may claim either the privilege to complain of the Care Committee or any other organisation, or the right to advise his fellows as to changes in social laws and systems. The law is that

> "There is no expeditious road
> To pack and label men for God,
> And save them by the barrel load."

It is not possible for me or for you to save the poor from poverty until one of the fallen has been

[1] "The percentage of children found to be verminous to children examined was 22·4 in 1910, as compared with 20·9 in 1909. The increase may be due to a somewhat stricter standard."—Report of Medical Officer (Education), L.C.C., for 1910. But that there is not a decrease shows that the present system is not yet perfect

raised by our help from his particular ditch. This is a daily task which will seldom last less than six months and may take as many years. Even then one may fail; frequently the first really whole-hearted effort to save one that appears to be lost is a failure. There are not a few who have thus been initiated into Social Service.

"Men speak too much about the world." People who generalise about the poor are usually those who have attempted to deal with regiments of the apparently destitute without first helping the one neighbour in need. They cry that they can do nothing without Acts of Parliament, neglectful of the many Acts forgotten and the many but partly used.

We may helpfully be a little clearer on another point. Are the poor provided by a curious Providence that we may experiment our Christian principles upon them? How is it that we meddle with such comparative unconcern in their lives, when it would never occur to us to extend the same treatment to the actual neighbour whose social position is upon the same level as our own? Do we think of the impertinence of our assumptions about the poor, our readiness to prescribe rules and regulations for their conduct, their health, what they should eat and drink, and how they should amuse themselves? See the horror in our hands held up against the public-house and the music-hall. Observe our

pleasure in discussing laws for the improvement of the poor, and note the number of books which codify and classify them. And in the end may we not be seeking to satisfy the void in our own spiritual or economic life at their expense?

The Strength of the Care Committee.—For the Care Committee has been created a power which no other public body has yet exactly found. In its main function to protect and care for the children, the Care Committee is given a unique opportunity to attack the home (where the disease of poverty manifests itself) at its most vulnerable point; and this power is based upon the self-sacrifice of those who believe that unless the waste of child life, the waste of poverty, be checked, there can be no longer any national or civic life worth maintaining.

In the Care Committee system a municipal body asks not for the paid assistance of officers who can be bidden to do this or that, but for the unpaid help of those who will anticipate official instructions, who will daily make these less and less of a necessity as they slowly get to stand between the people and the degradation of poverty. The Care Committee should become a clearing-house—a house by the side of the road at which those in difficulty may inquire the way. It will not be every caller whom they can direct hopefully; there will be for some years those who can only be dealt with in some sort of workhouse or penal colony.

But the hope of this house of call is in the people that dwell therein; if they are to be, as now, people of good will, taking up their service there as a function of citizenship, how different the reception to the wayfarer from that which would be accorded to him from the official, whose tendency would be to adjust the case to his rules rather than to make his rules to suit the case!

What is there for one to do in this house by the side of the road? Must it not be a place of vision, where men see an horizon beyond that of the street in which they live or of the factory in which they work? A place where we may learn simple things—that thrift is the power to spend six coppers as sixpence, not as threepence; that there is joy in making clean that which before was dirty; that air, even London air, is a free gift of God, which must gladly be admitted into rooms and tenements. We may learn to grow flowers where old tins were wont to be deposited. It will not be amiss if we begin with the little things; nor will our work suffer if, as we enter the class-rooms, playground and homes, we look upon the children and believe that "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Where shall this new body fit in with a Poor Law system? Will it not have to do more than represent the people; must it not be composed of the people[1]—

[1] The army of helpers must be recruited at least from the tradesman and the artisan class, as well as from the class of those who can serve

something entirely democratic? The elected representatives at the Centre may for the present direct the work of the Care Committee; they might well supply it with decent accommodation and certain purely clerical assistance. There will need to be a few officers to form a link between the Care Committee and the Centre, so that the thought of the one is not ignorant of the experience of the other.

But ultimately the elected authority will need to be linked up with a committee directly representative of the work. If this expert committee be composed of men and women sent up from the districts where the real work is being done, they will be able, perhaps, to overcome the tiresome division of party, and through the power of knowledge and experience be able to enlighten even Committees on Finance or Chancellors of the Exchequer.

Ten Years' Programme of Reform.—It is impossible to re-adjust everything at the same moment; the problem of poverty cannot be solved in a day, even by a committee of experts. But might it not be possible to outline a policy covering, say, ten years? Public opinion is surely prepared for a move forward. We owe not a little to the divided opinions expressed in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws. The subject has thereby been advertised and talked of so much that the nation

their country with their leisure. ("Charity and Social Life."—C. S. Loch, p. 466.)

should be ready to respond in some tangible way. But it is a subject on which division of opinion should not be allowed to become merged in party conflict. Would it not be possible for the King to form a "Committee of National Strength" to plan and prepare the way for a fuller national life?

Committee of National Strength.—Yet it is well to think what we should expect of such a committee, with its ten years' programme or its foresight for a hundred years, building as it might be, perhaps, for eternity. I wonder whether it would begin by reforming the Poor Laws, or by bringing in Bills for National Insurance[1] or by lowering the age limit of Old Age Pensions. I wonder whether it would summon before it either Dr. Loch or Mrs. Sidney Webb to give evidence on the problem of destitution. The Committee might agree with Carlyle, and consider that the strength of the nation is to be found in its strong men and women, deciding that the problem was to increase their efficiency and usefulness. Carlyle wrote: "If I had a commonwealth to reform or to govern, certainly it should not be the Devil's regiments of the line that I would first of all concentrate my attention on!" It might, by some curious chance, agree with the principle set forth at the beginning of this book, that a man's first

[1] National Insurance being nevertheless a most excellent aim; whether it will be furthered by the Act for which Mr. Lloyd George is responsible, is not within my power to determine.

business is his own particular job, which needs to be done as faithfully and honourably as lies in his power. Then, having come to such a conclusion, would it not be imperative to see that men became inspired to demand work in which they could delight, in which beauty should linger and faith and honour dwell?

And how is this to be accomplished? Will it be met by the garden city workshop, which looks well in the advertisements? Can it be met in any degree whatever by the recreations and amusements outside the workshop, if, within, girls spend their lives pasting on labels and the men for ever stand at the service of a machine? It sounds ridiculous to complain of the industrial system which gives us machine-made chairs and machine-made everything else at a fraction of the cost and in far greater quantity than the hand artist can produce them for us. But how many "reformers" are there who proclaim that industry can be brightened by the vision of the workers? Would the Committee of National Strength realise this? Would it insist that all work bought by municipalities and governments should be beautiful work from the hand and brain of the workers? Surely it could not allow State schools to be furnished with hideous cupboards and desks ground out of the saw mills and planing factories! Would it not rather have to consider the holiness of labour? It might think it worth while even to consult the

Governors of the Borough Polytechnic to know what it was that caused them to employ Roger Fry, Albert Rothenstein, Duncan Grant and their friends to decorate the Dining Hall.

I do not suggest that machinery *quâ* machinery is an evil, I think only that we have allowed it too much to master us. While the worker is not only subservient to the machine but to the unproductive financier, there is a twofold power at work to hinder the development of his productive faculties except in the merely mechanical way of increased output. The consumer, not the producer, now controls the machine. To alter this, the surplus profits which the philanthropic employer spends in swimming baths and free libraries might be devoted to the translation of all possible processes of manufacture into real manufacture—work of the hands.

Thus may we dream of the time when work shall be once more of the nature of a sacrament, a pledge given by man and a token received from God, the outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace. Joy might then be known to the people in all the compass of their life.

But if this gospel of work is to be preached effectively it must find its missionaries who will proclaim it now, not waiting until that far-off day when our national arrangements shall be on a better footing.

They will need at once to begin to preach the

holiness of all work, even that of the, to outward appearance, deadly chain-making factory; for in that way only will the worker grow dissatisfied with the nature of his work, and look forward with Mr. Edward Spencer[1] to the day when "the Trade Unions, like the guilds of the past, must concern themselves with the development of industry and the education of the worker to that end," and be alive to the cultivation of the labourer's powers "as a producer," when their pressure will be exerted to the full to prevent the employment of its members on degrading and insincere work. A man's ambition may not then be to become foreman and boss with a position superior to his fellows, but to become a master workman, delighting in the use of his brain and heart in the work to which he has set his hand. "If a man love the labour of any trade, apart from any question of success or fame, the gods have called him."[2]

The "social worker" would surely rejoice in a message of this kind. Many have begun dimly to realise its possibility as they have undertaken to co-operate with the Juvenile Committees of the Labour Exchange. But there is still their other "social" work which requires all that they can give.

There are probably two steps the Committee

[1] "Women and the Handicrafts," Edward Spencer. *Englishwoman*, October, 1911; also *cf. Fortnightly Review*, November, 1911.
[2] R. L. Stevenson.

would take in the nature of Social Reform. It would, I think, provide that in all cities there should be room enough and to spare for the playgrounds of the children. It would insist, so far indeed as such a thing can be insisted upon, that children should be educated in the arts and mysteries of life, so that they would grow up not only wanting to do real work, but able to read and speak good English, to write as though it were a privilege, as it is, to use paper and ink for the conveyance of thought, and to behold a universe of wonder even in our streets of dull houses and artificially illuminated shops.

Those of us who go down the back ways of this city, who see the children at school or playing in the street, who know the misery of the single furnished room and the sights and sounds in the land of darkness, know the need for strong men and women with power to face these things and courage to overcome them. It is true that recent experience tells us that the structure of the nation cannot be improved if its new buildings are based upon the sands of human weakness, and that we have now to build on firmer stuff; but whether we have helped in the former policy, as I have, or waited discontented in the background for a day which seemed too slow in coming, we do care enough to want a better order in our midst; we are anxious that men should have life—and have it more abundantly. And caring so for the end, can we much longer disagree as to the means?

APPENDIX

Notes Contributed by Two Workers on Children's Care Committees

I

Feeding Cases.—The number of different *families* whose children have at any time had free meals is 26. Most of these were fed only for a very short time, and the Committee noted with great satisfaction that, in every case when the father has obtained work, the fact has been at once reported to the teacher in order that the meals could be stopped. It is evident that, while there are a few cases of extreme poverty, the general character of the district is good.

The children of widows, widowers or working mothers from five families have received—(those from two families are now receiving)—meals for which they pay. The sums charged have varied from 1*d.* to—in a very exceptional case—3*d.* A uniform charge of 2*d.* is now made.

Feeding Centre.—A rota of helpers was made out so that there might be two volunteers present each day. There have been no complaints of a serious character and any reports as to unsuitable food, etc., have been sympathetically dealt with by the Correspondent. The discipline and behaviour of the children appears to be good.

Method of Selection.—In my school there is no difficulty or ambiguity about selecting the cases to be fed, meals having been given only where the father is altogether out of work. Occasionally there are some other earnings, but in no case is there any question of these being adequate to the needs of the family.

There are three permanent cases (with the exception of one child, these are the only ones being fed at the end of March, 1911). One of these is unsatisfactory and is in the hands of the Divisional Superintendent. In another the father is a permanent invalid. The third is well-known to the C.O.S. as a satisfactory family, but the father cannot get work.

Home Visiting.—A home visit is paid in every case where meals are required after the mother or father has made a personal application at the school. A further visit is paid each time the case comes up for revision. The frequency of this necessarily varies with the circumstances. Home visits are also paid in all cases not otherwise known to the Committee where cheap boots are thought to be needed or where medical conditions are unsatisfactory.

Recovery of Cost.—There has been no question of recovery of cost for meals; and the collection of the payments for medical treatment is left in the hands of the L.C.C. Officer.

Cases of Cruelty and Neglect.—Two cases have been referred by the Committee to the N.S.P.C.C. In one this Society is trying to induce the mother to obtain medical treatment for her child, but application to the Guardians, which cannot be enforced, is the only true solution.

In the other the neglect is not considered wilful, and it has been difficult to effect any improvement.

Medical Treatment.—Since the Committee began its work, various cases needing medical attention have been reported by the teachers and have been visited by the secretary with a view to improving the home conditions or referring them to suitable agencies.

In November and December, 1910, a medical inspection was held of certain selected cases of infants and of all those in the other departments between the ages of 8 and 9 and 12 and 13.

329 children were examined. 222 or just over two-thirds were found to be defective. 108 or about one-half of these had bad teeth *only*. Of the remaining 114 only 32 availed themselves of the special arrangements between the L.C.C. and the hospitals. All the mothers were seen at the time of the inspection, the plan to be adopted for treatment discussed, and, where the special arrangements with St. Mary's or another hospital were to be adopted, the form was at once filled in and the payments assessed. All the cases (except *some* of those suffering from teeth only, for whom no provision is made) have been followed up. Those who have not had treatment have been visited—often more than once—and nearly all have now been satisfactorily attended to. The exceptions are usually cases where the illness or work of the mother delays or prevents their taking the children to hospitals.

No cases have been referred to the Invalid Children's Aid Association as a result of the inspection, but several other children in the school are on the books of that Society. Several children have been sent to the Dispensary for the Prevention of Consumption. It is hoped that one member of the Committee will keep a register of, and visit periodically, those delicate children where regular advice is needed.

Children's Country Holiday Fund.—The teachers

have had in the past to do the main work of the C.C.H.F. The Committee, feeling this to be unsatisfactory, were fortunate enough to secure a member to take over the work entirely. About 87 children were sent away in 1910, and in every case with satisfactory results.

Boots.—In the early part of the winter, 1909-10, one or two pairs of boots were supplied in necessitous cases from some that remained over from the previous year's store and one pair was obtained from the Attendance Aid Committee. In February, 1910, Sir John Kirk granted 40 pairs of half-price boots. Many of these remained in hand for the winter, 1910-11. In June, 1910, seven pairs were given by the Correspondent. These are given to the children in most cases at half-price, and it is hoped to use the money so collected for the purchase of other boots to be sold cheaply to necessitous cases.

The teachers have in the past been responsible for collecting the money, but the matter has now been taken over by a volunteer and a regular Boot Club has been formed. The decision of the Local Association as to the prices for boots and the firm to be employed is awaited before printing the cards and rules.

Parents' Meetings.—It is hoped to have meetings of parents twice a year—once during each of the two winter terms. Two such meetings have been held with attendances of about 200.

In each case there was a short entertainment, followed by an address and short speeches by the head teachers and members of the Committee.

It is hoped that in the course of time the attendances will so increase that two meetings on each occasion will be necessary in order to accommodate the parents from the boys' and girls' departments. The gatherings appear to be greatly appreciated by those who have been present.

After-Care.—A register has been kept of all the children who have left since July, 1909. These now number about 170.

At first the children were visited as far as possible three months before they left. Now, however, the whole of this important work has been undertaken by one member, and the Committee are most fortunate in securing her services. All the old scholars on the register (150) were invited to an evening meeting in the school in November. There was an entertainment and speeches by the head teachers and members of the Care Committee. The result was the formation of an "Old Pupils' Association" with an executive committee, consisting of eight old pupils, a girl as treasurer, a boy as secretary, and a Care Committee member as chairman. Meetings of the Association are held twice a term and a subscription of 3*d.* a term or 8*d.* a year is charged. It is intended that the meetings should be alternately entertainment and educational! The Association has been taken up with a good deal of keenness, and it seems probable that, besides being a convenient means of keeping in touch with the old pupils, it will afford opportunity to encourage thrift, create *esprit de corps* and induce the children to become members of good clubs, etc.

Joint Committee.—A Joint Committee has been formed consisting of three members from the four nearest schools. This Committee meets at my school about once in two months for the discussion of all questions affecting Care Committee work and the meetings have proved very helpful.

II

My Committee deals with a poor district comprising some 2,800 elementary school children. The numbers in

receipt of relief follow the curve of other forms of charitable assistance, that is to say, it reached its lowest point in May and June and its highest in February and March. The numbers varied from 90 per day or 3 per cent. in February, 1910, to 50 per day or 1·8 per cent. in June of this year.

Of the 224 families under review, the children of fifteen have been fed continuously for periods varying from twelve months to two-and-a-half years; many of them can be classed as chronic paupers. Fifteen other families have been fed at intervals during a period of twelve months or over, and may be said to correspond to the "ins and outs" of the workhouse. In cases of chronic poverty attempts have been made to enforce Section 12 of the Children Act, but the machinery is cumbersome and the same difficulty is experienced as in attempting the recovery of the cost of the meals. The evidence of poverty must be such that the physical suffering of the children through hunger is apparent even to the most casual observer. If the parents decline to apply to the Poor Law, there is no possibility, except in rare instances, of compulsion.

Neglect and cruelty, though also difficult to prove without very obvious physical injury, are more easily dealt with through the instrumentality of the Care Committee; three heads of families were successfully prosecuted, and their children sent to residential schools. The visits of the special officer appointed by the L.C.C. have certainly affected an improvement in the standard of care among the more callous parents in a squalid neighbourhood.

My Committee has relied mainly on the applicant's statement of the income of the family, checked by the knowledge of the various members concerning the wage

obtaining in the district. In a neighbourhood where casual dock-labour prevails, there can often be no certainty concerning the wage, which varies not only weekly, but daily; while the women, who in almost all instances come up for interview, frequently do not know their husbands' earnings in any particular week.

The following facts were brought to light by the investigation of the 224 cases which came up during the year:—

The necessity of the children was first observed by the teachers in 159 cases, the other cases came to the notice of the Committee by the reports of district visitors, members of the Charity Organisation Society and other social workers. In 191 cases the father was alive. Of these 174 were labourers, carmen, dock-hands or "anything." Of the others the trades were as follows:—Bootmakers, 3; hawkers, 1; fish-shops, 2; packer, 1; bookbinder, 1; painter, 1; lighterman, 1; waiter, 1; billposter, 1; bricklayer, 2; furrier, 1; umbrella-maker, 1.

In the thirty-two cases where the mother was the wage-earner, the occupations were as follows:—charing, 22; selling flowers, 2; umbrella-makers, 2; shopgirl, 1; tailoring, 1; needlework, 1; shop, 1. Two had no work.

The absence of any trade in the great majority of cases among both men and women is an outstanding feature. The alleged causes of destitution were:—Under-employment, 140; invalidity, 52; widowhood, 22; desertion, 10. In fourteen cases loss of employment could be directly traced to the habits of the wage-earners; the chief causes seem to have been drink and laziness.

Practically no provision has been made for loss of wage through sickness; only two of the applicants subscribed

to an accident benefit society, and a few were in local sharing-out clubs. Almost all were or had been in various life assurance societies.

Reliable evidence of character was forthcoming in 114 cases. Fifty-five applicants were of good repute, and fifty-nine the reverse. The characters which bore inspection ranged from "very good" to "fair," and the others included three thieves and all degrees of vice, including one applicant who was stigmatised as "careless."

Evidence of drink was established in twenty-four cases or one in every five, an eloquent fact indeed for the oratory of a temperance advocate.

These may be called the present or immediate causes of poverty. The investigations of the Committee throw some light on to certain remote or ulterior causes, and suggest consideration of the attitude of the parents towards their responsibilities. Statistics as to the age of marriage of the applicants show that in sixty-six cases out of 211, or nearly one in three, both the parents were under twenty-three at the time of marriage, while in twenty-two cases both were under twenty, and in twenty more one was under twenty.

Of the same families 63 per cent. have four children or more living.

These figures, taken in conjunction with the falling birth-rate among those classes who do support their own children, indicate a grave and far-reaching cause for anxiety.

Further, the housing accommodation is lamentably insufficient. Life under conditions where 83 per cent. in a population averaging two adults and four children inhabit two rooms and a large number only one, can only be disastrous to the welfare of the coming generation.

During the period from August, 1910, to June, 1911, 199 medical cases have been under observation. In fifty-nine cases no results are known as yet; forty-three obtained treatment from free hospitals, dispensaries or private doctors; one was sent to an industrial home: three were dealt with by the Invalid Children's Aid Society, and two were given cod-liver oil and malt. With the exception of five who had not yet attended at the time when these figures were collected, the remainder (ninety-five) attended the London Hospital. Of these, one was found not to need treatment, five ceased to attend before the treatment was completed, sixteen are still attending and the remaining seventy-three were successfully treated.

It speaks well for the parents that so far as we know only five have failed to take advantage of the medical treatment, and considering the short time the system has been working, the result seems very satisfactory.

It is, of course, not possible to say very much of the After-care work at present.

In this area 103 cases have been dealt with since leaving school. Of these, forty-seven found work for themselves, five in their father's trade, eleven were placed by the Skilled Employment Committee, and a few by the Local Advisory Committee. In thirty-two cases reports have not yet been obtained, and some of those cases classed as having found work for themselves may have done so through the Labour Exchange without the knowledge of the Committee. One boy who was under-developed physically and mentally has been placed on a flower-farm in the country, and is reported to be doing well and improving in every way. Two have not got work owing to bad health, four have moved or been lost sight of and three girls are wanted at home.

It is difficult to divide the work obtained into skilled and unskilled. Eleven boys and nine girls have been placed in skilled trades such as: Engineering, copper-smithing, draughtsmanship, tailoring, upholstery and millinery.

Twenty are in factory work, more or less skilled, such as wholesale clothing, cigarette-making, jam-making, tea-packing, rope and tarpaulin-making. The remaining seventy-two are messenger-boys, van boys, office boys, errand boys and street sellers. These last are not entirely without prospects, some being attached to the Post Office, or the railway companies or the docks, where they have a fair chance of remaining on if their conduct is good.

The help of Parish-workers and Club-leaders has been sought to visit and keep in touch with these children, and in some cases valuable help has been given by those who already know the families, and are therefore able to give reliable information about them and to help to advise them more effectively.

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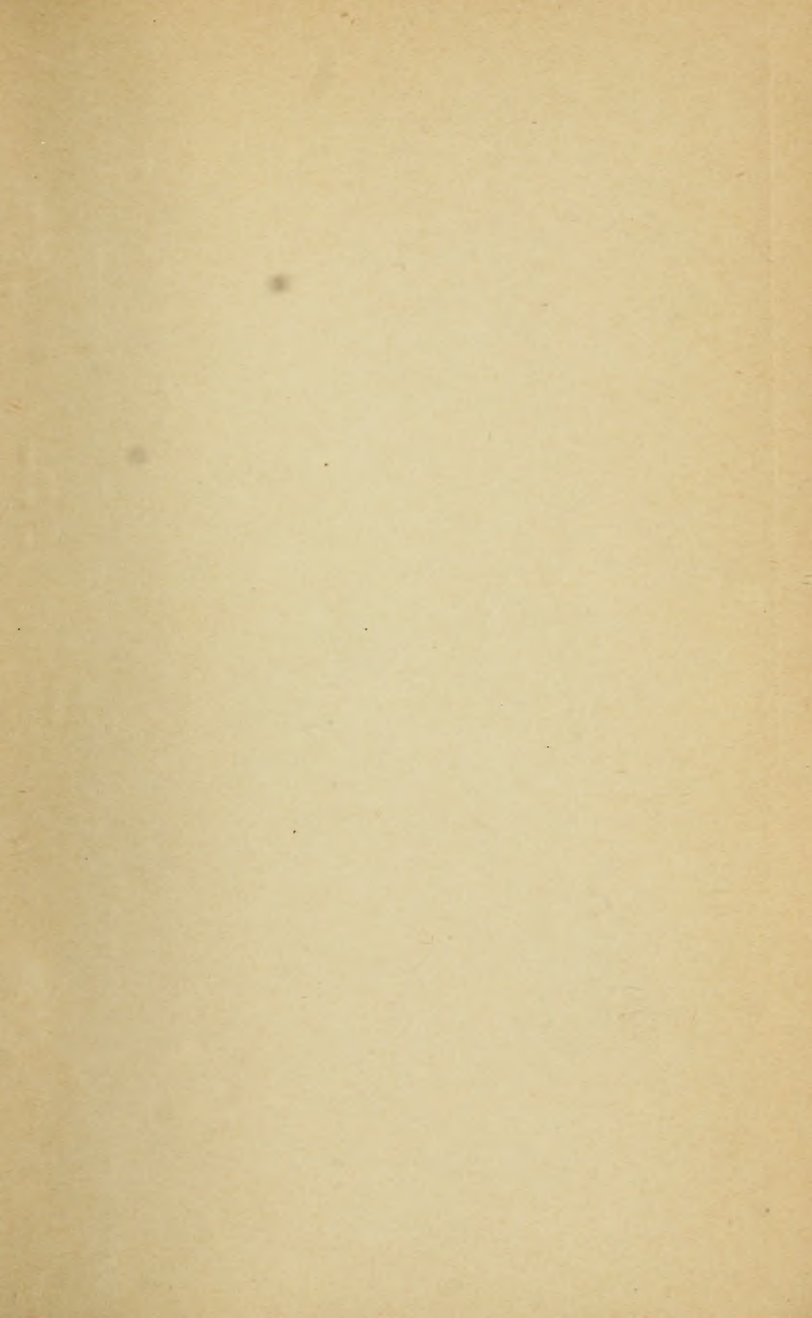

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